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YOUNG MAN'S COUNSELOR

by

Daniel Wise.

VISION OF ST DOMINIC. P. 166

NEW YORK

CHARLES L. COOPER.

1852.

THE
YOUNG MAN'S COUNSELLOR;

OR,

SKETCHES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

OF

THE DUTIES AND DANGERS

OF

YOUNG MEN.

DESIGNED TO BE A GUIDE TO SUCCESS IN THIS LIFE, AND TO
HAPPINESS IN THE LIFE WHICH IS TO COME.

BY REV. DANIEL WISE, A. M.,

AUTHOR OF "THE PATH OF LIFE," "BRIDAL GREETINGS," "LIFE OF
SINGLE," ETC. ETC.

NINTH THOUSAND.

New-York:
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West's Practice

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1950,
BY DANIEL WISE,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the District of Massachusetts.

INSCRIPTION.

TO

THE YOUNG MEN OF AMERICA

This Book

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED,

BY THEIR SINCERE FRIEND AND WELL-WISHER,

DANIEL WISE.

P R E F A C E.

I LOVE to look upon a young man. There is a hidden potency concealed within his breast which charms and pains me. I silently ask, what will that youth accomplish in the after-time of his life? Will he take rank with the benefactors or with the scourges of his race? Will he, erewhile, exhibit the patriotic virtue of Hampden and Washington, or the selfish craftiness of Benedict Arnold? If he have genius, will he consecrate it, like Milton and Montgomery, to humanity and religion; or, like Moore and Byron, to the polluted altars of passion? If he have mercantile skill, will he employ it, like Astor or Girard, to gratify his lust of wealth; or to elevate and bless humanity, like some of our living merchant princes? If the gift of eloquence be hidden in his undeveloped soul, will he use it, like Summerfield, in favor of relig-

ion, or like Patrick Henry and Adams, in battling for human rights; or will he, for mammon's sake, prostitute that gift to the uses of tyranny and infidelity? Will that immortal soul, which beams with intelligence and power in his countenance, ally itself with its Creator, and thus rise to the sublime height of its destiny; or will it wage war with truth and duty, and thus sink to degradation and to death? As I raise these great queries, I at once do reverence to the high potentiality of his nature, and tremble for his fate. I feel a desire arising within me to bear a part in guiding him into the way of right, duty and happiness. As a fruit of that often-felt desire, I have written this book. May its success equal the ardor and sincerity of my wishes for the best good of young men.

DANIEL WISE.

Fall River, Nov. 1850.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

YOUTHFUL DAY-DREAMS DISSOLVED.

The young man invited to view the future — A joyous thought — A young man's dream of life — Disenchantment — The sower and the harvest — The young man a sower in the field of life — The two harvests — To be a young man a very serious fact — Sailing on a quiet river, and steering through dangerous straits — The enchanted hill — Life an enchanted hill, with many victims — Every young man who falls is his own destroyer — The Alpine muleteer and the meditative man — An enemy at home — The asp — The young man's complaint anticipated — Caution the parent of success — Napoleon's forecast — Dupont's incaution — The defeat at Baylen — Every young man may conquer the obstacles of life — The young man should cheerfully contend for success — Alcinou's Garden, 13

CHAPTER II.

THE CORNER-STONE OF A SUCCESSFUL LIFE.

CHAPTER III.

INTEGRITY NECESSARY TO SUCCESS IN LIFE.

Integrity — Its nature and operations — Kossuth's noble reply — Zuingle and his Papal pension — The Scotch divines and their opposition to state control — A sublime scene — The protest — The secession — Excitement — Joy of the people — Tanfield Hall — Song of Joy — Moral beauty of integrity — Integrity inspires confidence — It gives influence — The rivalry of Robespierre and Mirabeau an illustration — Exciting scene in the Jacobin Club — Robespierre's victory — The secret of his success — Integrity necessary in small matters — The clerk, the mechanic, the farmer, the artist, exhorted to this — Small tests not to be despised — Their effect on the formation of right habits — Luther — Zuingle — Kossuth — A counting-room scene — The reward of integrity — Lightning conductors an illustration — Gideon Lee and the goat-skins — The young man's resolve — A serious question — Counting the cost — Religion creates integrity of the highest order — Should be sought, 43

CHAPTER IV.

INTELLIGENCE AN ELEMENT OF A SUCCESSFUL LIFE.

A German legend — Knowledge a talisman — How some young men treat knowledge — The influence of intellect on the countenance — Influence a result of intellectual culture — Examples in the lives of Franklin, Cromwell, Eldon, Burke, Canning, Brougham — The sailor-boy's reverie at sea — Its results — All young men dream of being successful — Why so few realize their hopes — The price of success — Cicero and Demosthenes — Sir William Jones — Newton — Burke — Michael Angelo — John Q. Adams — The river and the spring — Any young man may be successful, if he will — Poverty no necessary hindrance — Cook, Nelson, Franklin, Eldon, Ferguson, Heyne, Kirke White, &c. — Extract from Longfellow — The young man incited to effort — Religion needed to guide the intellect — Lord Bacon — Rousseau — Voltaire — Byron — The steam-ship — Poetic extract — Scene in an ancient village — The secret of John Bunyan's fame — Religion and its influence over the intellect — Its great thoughts — Religious faith — Newton — Richard Watson — Appeal to a young man, 66

CHAPTER V.

ENERGY AN ELEMENT OF DISTINCTION.

Impossible the adjective of fools — What is energy — Longfellow's *Excelsior* and the idea of energy — Energy and great achievements — The student at college — The history of great men appealed to — Christopher Columbus an example of energy — Energy can overcome every obstacle — Energy distinguished from rashness — An oriental warrior — Mercantile Derars — A sketch proposed — Young Edgar's rashness and ruin — His mistake explained — Impulsive energy described — Its uselessness — The snail and the hare — Religion a means of developing energy — Its central command — Its divine aid — Its requisition of might in everything — The philosophy of success — Religion must be sought, 87

CHAPTER VI.

INDUSTRY THE HIGHWAY TO SUCCESS.

An old legend — The recluse — The angel's visit — The palm-tree and the rope — Moral of the legend — Industry essential to the enjoyment of life — Moments — *Aeropus* — Prince Bonbennin — The swallow — Busy idlers — Goldsmith's *Croaker* — Useful pursuits and worthy aims necessary to industry — What may be accomplished by industry — John Jacob Astor — James and John Harper — Lieutenant Governor Armstrong — William Cobbett — Various examples of industry — Industry not unfavorable to health or longevity — Henry K. White — The Eastern missionary — Dying of nothing to do — The victim of self-indulgence — The hunter and the spoiled venison — Picture of an idle man — Desire of young men for an idle life considered — A life of idleness a curse — Effect on the intellect — Beautiful extract from Tennyson — Idleness and vice — The fate of the idler — Extreme cases — The *Succedaneum* — Life reviewed by an idler on his death-bed — Religion an antidote for idleness — Quotation from Aldich, 105

CHAPTER VII.

ECONOMY AND TACT.

Importance of saving — The leaking reservoir — *Pactolus* and poverty — The good genius — Economy a trite theme — A picture — Ralph Montcalm

described — Dialogue between Ralph and a dandy — Cigar-smoking discussed — Ralph and the fashionable young man — Boarding at a fashionable house — Ralph's friends and benevolence — Ralph a good example of economy — Principles of economy — Spend less than you earn — Little expenses — The ants and the captive caterpillar — Debt — Littleness — The farmer and the student — Tact — What it is — It is necessary — May be cultivated — Relation of religion to economy and tact, 129

CHAPTER VIII.

HARMONY OF CHARACTER.

Remark by the Abbé Mennais — The harmony of nature illustrative of harmony of character — Effects of excess, or defects in particular qualities — The rich youth an example of defect — Quotation from Shakspeare — Lord Byron an illustration of excess and defect — Necessity of symmetry in character — An important question — The circle — Regulus and his sentiment concerning Roman honor — A central principle like the centripetal force — What principle will produce symmetry — Honor insufficient — Self-respect defective — Example in case of Professor Webster — Religion furnishes the principle — Its comprehensiveness — Its potentiality — Young man urged to seek it, 146

CHAPTER IX.

VICE AND ITS ALLUREMENTS.

Dante and the three beasts — The panther a symbol of voluptuousness — The lion, of ambition — The wolf, of avarice — Successive dangers — Youth the age of passion — Passion may be an instrument of mental strength — One chief danger — Byron on vice — The blooming shrub — Delusive aspect of vice — The canary birds — Fascinations — Dante's inscription over the gate of hell — Escape from vice next to impossible — The cobra di capello — History a great commentary on the power of vice — Mark Antony — Robert Burns — Richard Brinsley Sheridan — Vice enslaves great minds — The only hope — The plea of the novitiate — The dogs of Egypt — A little indulgence dangerous — Tasso's knights in Armida's Isle — Invisible hooks — The bird — The watch — Mohammed and the poison of Khaibar — Horace Mann's thought — Religion the effectual safeguard, 162

CHAPTER X.

VICE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

- Patriarchal life — Abraham and Lot — Lot and the vale of Sodom — His disappointment and ruin — The youth and guilty pleasures — Hazael's indignation — Disappointment of profligates — Testimony of a veteran — Why vice is pursued — Passion a tyrant — The drunkard — The quagmire — Mental slavery — Dr. Morton — Extract from Byron — George Wachs — The sudden desire — The temptation — The crime — Shame after a first fall — Ruin of the vicious a moral certainty — Swift destruction — Reginald — His character — His tempters — His fall — Scene in his sick room — His pastor's visit — Last words — Legions of such youth — Ruin a Briareus — Rivers with many mouths — Arthur's visit to the city — dissipation — the crime — prison scene — the death hour — Young man addressed — Ruin sometimes delayed — Self-confidence — The furious rider — Risks — Two facts — Crime — How it begins — The agonized mother — English criminals — Effects of vice on the physical constitution — A victim described — Remorse — Viscount Kenmuir — Oliver Goldsmith — Spir — Death — Judgment to come, 182

CHAPTER XI.

VICE AND ITS SEDUCERS

The voices of home — Vice renders a young man deaf to these voices — Bad books — Impure pictures — their influence — Are all novels injurious — One class of novels leads to another — The ripple, the breakers, and the under current — The caution too late — Experience of novel-readers — Quotation from Dante — Novel-readers cannot escape without some evil — The river and its bed — Wicked companions — Their pleasure to corrupt — Air and mind — Novices and their seducers — The turning point — The bird and its prey — Finished seducers — The gambler described — The libertine — How he tempts — The harlot — Fate of her victim — The sceptic — His character — His seductions — Character of the champions of infidelity — All the wicked to be avoided — Appeal, 210

CHAPTER XII.

COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE.

The barren rock and the cloud of dust — Forest trees and rivers springing from small beginnings — Human blindness to the works of nature —

Blindness to the results of human actions — Courtship a serious theme — Erroneous views of courtship — False views of marriage — The high ends contemplated in marriage — Right opinions necessary to avoid debasement — Safety of right views — Necessity of caution in the choice of a bride — Care needed at the beginning — Accomplishments no substitute for solid excellences — Hannah More — Qualities to be sought in a young woman — Frugality — Industry — Sobriety — Intelligence and good sense — Amiability — Pleasing countenance — Moral influence of early courtship — Affection necessary to honorable marriage — Social equality — Marriage for money hateful — Sceptical women to be avoided — No haste to marry — Stability — Wrong to violate promises of marriage through fickleness — Are such promises never to be violated — Courting at night censured — William Cobbett's courtship — Concluding note,	230
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YOUNG MAN'S COUNSELLOR.

CHAPTER I.

YOUTHFUL DAY-DREAMS DISSOLVED.



IVE me your hand, my dear young friend, and I will lead you to the dark passages and the rugged steeps whose forbidding shadows fall gloomily on the highway of life. I will also conduct you to the green and sunny spots whereon you may indulge in innocent delights. Open your heart to my counsels ! I will teach you how to escape the teeming dangers, which, like troops of ill-omened phantoms, wait in the "slippery places" of youth, seeking his destruction. I will unfold to you the secrets of

success and of eminence in this life, and the sure means of winning a crown of glory in the next!

It is, without doubt, a very joyous thought to you, that you have become a young man. Manhood has long been the fairy land of your boyhood's reveries. Your full heart swells, as you exclaim :

“ Time on my brow hath set his seal ;
I start to find myself a man.”

Your spirits flow in rich currents of feeling, and your lively imagination paints the most inviting pictures of the future. To you, life is as the lovely vale of Arno, with its enchanting scenery of groves and gardens, grottoes, palaces and towers ; its transparent lakes, delicious air, and sunny skies. You can comprehend the poet, who says :

“ To sanguine youth's enraptured eye,
Heaven has its reflex in the sky,
The winds themselves have melody,
Like harp, some seraph sweepeth
A silver decks the hawthorn gloom,
A legend shrines the mossy tomb,
And spirits throng the starry gloom,
Her reign when midnight keepeth.”

It seems a pity to dim so fair a vision. I feel sad, as I proceed to break the sweet enchantment, and by touching it with the wand of truth, to overcast it with clouds and storms. But I should not be a faithful friend, if I did not assure you that these rosy anticipations are destined to be followed by disappointment. You must and will learn the truthfulness of the following sweetly solemn strain :

“ Little we dream, when life is new,
And nature fresh and fair to view,
When throbs the heart to pleasure true,
As if for naught it wanted —
That year by year, and ray by ray,
Romance’s sunlight dies away,
And long before the hair is gray
The heart is disenchanted.”

Let us walk forth into the fields, and learn a lesson from yonder husbandman. He is casting handfuls of seed broadcast upon the upturned soil. A moment’s reflection teaches you that very much of the forthcoming harvest depends upon that sower and his seed. If he has properly chosen and prepared the soil,— if the seed be of high quality,— if it be

sown in proper quantity, and harrowed with all due skill, the conditions of a good and abundant harvest are fulfilled, and may be reasonably expected. But if he has scantily sown poor seed in an ungenial and neglected soil, a good harvest is out of the question. The application of this figure to yourself is easy. You are now a sower of seed on the field of life. These bright days of youth are the seed-time. Every thought of your intellect, every emotion of your heart, every word of your tongue, every principle you adopt, every act you perform, is a seed, whose good or evil fruit will be the bliss or bane of your after-time. As is the seed, so will be the crop. Indulge your appetites, gratify your passions, neglect your intellect, foster wrong principles, cherish habits of idleness, vulgarity, dissipation, and in the after years of manhood you will reap a plentiful crop of corruption, shame, degradation, and remorse ; and it may be,

" Year by year alone
Sit brooding in the ruins of a life,
Nightmare of youth, the spectre of *yourself*."

But if you control your appetites, subdue your passions, firmly adopt and rigidly practise right principles, form habits of purity, propriety, sobriety and diligence, your harvest will be one of honor, health and happiness ; and,

“After-time,

And that full voice which circles round the grave,
Will rank you nobly.”

That you have reached the period of youth, is, therefore, for you, a very *serious* fact. “Great destinies lie shrouded” in your swiftly passing hours. Great responsibilities stand in the passages of every day life. Great dangers lie hidden in the by-paths of life’s great highway ; and syrens, whose song is as charming as the voice of Calypso, are there to allure you to destruction. Great uncertainty hangs over your future history. * God has given you existence, with full power and opportunity to improve it, and be happy. He has given you equal power to despise the gift, and be wretched. Which you will do, is the grand problem to be solved by your choice and conduct. To you, so young, so inex-

2*

perienced, so susceptible of evil, so capable of good, so full of stormy feelings, so unsettled in opinion, is committed the awful trust of your future happiness. Your bliss, or misery, in two worlds, hangs poised in the balance. The manner in which you spend your youth, will turn the scale, for weal or for woe. Verily it has been well said, that the season of youth is a *critical* period. Critical, indeed! And I would, if possible, engrave the thought, in ineffaceable letters, on your susceptible heart, and make you feel how much the fashioning of your destiny, which hitherto has been more in the hands of others than in your own, is now confided to your discretion.

As a boy, at home, you have sailed upon the calm waters of a quiet river, in a bark, carefully furnished by a mother's love, and safely guided by a father's skill. Now, you are sailing through the winding channels, the rocky straits, the rapid, rushing currents, at the river's mouth, into the great sea of active life. And here, for the first time, you are in *command* of the vessel. On *your* skill and caution depends the safety of the passage. Neglect the rules

aid down on the chart of experience by previous navigators, take passion for a pilot, place folly at the helm, and your bark will shortly lie a pitiful wreck on the rocks, or be so damaged as to peril your safety on the coming voyage. But study well the intricacies and dangers of your course, take counsel of experience, let caution be your pilot, and, without doubt, you will escape rock, current, eddy and whirlpool, and, with streamered masts and big white sail, float gayly forth to dare and conquer the perils of the sea beyond.

Among the fascinating stories of the Orientals, is one which describes an enchanted hill, whose summit concealed an object of incomparable worth. It was offered as a prize to him who shouald ascend the hill without looking behind him. but whoever ventured to secure this treasure was told that, if he did look backwards, he should be instantly changed into a stone. Many a princely youth, allured by the tempting prize, had ventured up that fatal hill; and as many had been changed to stones. For the adjacent groves were filled with most melodious voices

and with birds of sweetest song, whose bewitching strains and enticements followed each youth as he ascended, until he suffered his innate curiosity to control his hopes and fears — turned his head, and instantly became a stone. Hence, said the story, the hill-side was covered with stones.

To every young man, life is such an enchanted hill, with its thousands of alluring voices, and its unnumbered victims, who, prompted from within themselves, have listened to some fatal charmer of the senses, and have perished. Yet no one of them ever fell of necessity. Had they repressed the inward desire of evil, by directing the energy of their souls after the great prizes of religion and virtue, they would have become conquerors; for *outward* things have power only in proportion to the disposition of the mind to be affected by them. Why, for example, does the sublime and beautiful scenery of the Alps awaken no emotions of beauty or sublimity in the breast of the rude muleteer, whose life is spent in traversing their passages? And why does that same scenery hold the reflective and religious mind in rapt

admiration? The answer is simple, but significant. Between nature and the muleteer there exists no sympathy. He is hardened against her. But the soul of the meditative and cultivated man is in harmony with her charms. Hence, over the former she has no power, while she inspires the latter with rapture. So with the charms of vice; they fall powerless upon minds which, cased in the mail of virtue, are proof against them; but they are omnipotent to those whose undisciplined passions are looking out upon life with prurient curiosity. Such young men are doomed to illustrate the fable of the orient, and to lie along the highways of life, hardened, undone, and lost.

The young man cannot, therefore, fail to see that he carries the most potent of all sources of danger in his own breast. Within himself, as the malignant asp lay concealed in the basket of flowers brought to Cleopatra, lies his destroyer. Unless you suffer your own passions to exercise lordship over your reason and conscience, you cannot be greatly harmed. But herein lies your peril, at the present epoch of your

life. Passion is strong, because Reason is weak: Desire eager, because it must not be gratified. Your heart is a volcano of feeling, ever heaving, and seeking, especially when in presence of the outward tempter, to overflow your life with vice and abomination. There is a disposition in your soul to respond to the fatal voices which solicit your senses to trespass upon forbidden grounds. And herein—I solemnly repeat it—lies your most imminent danger.

These views are certainly sufficient to dim the lustre of those day-dreams of life, so natural and so universal in young men. Perhaps you consider them too sombre and gloomy in their aspects. You complain that I have dipped my pen in the too sober hues of autumn, when I ought to have written with the bright drops which sparkle like jewels on the gay blossoms and painted flowers of spring; that I have caused you to despond, when I should have stimulated your hopes and excited your courage. But such is not my intention, nor should aught I have said occasion the least despondency; it should only awaken caution—caution, the parent of safety, the

companion of success. Know you not, that dangers are not to be overcome by blindly rushing among them ? The wisest and best men are they who, like the greatest generals, take distinct cognizance of their dangers, and prepare with proper forecast to overcome them. Napoleon, that great master of war, never failed to calculate upon, and to provide beforehand for, every imaginable difficulty. Had his lieutenant, the unfortunate General Dupont, acted on the same principle in Spain, the defeat he suffered at Baylen would not have tarnished the lustre of his early fame, nor rested as a spot on the military glory of France. But he failed of fully apprehending the perils of his position ; was enveloped between two armies, and ingloriously defeated. And you, young man, unless you view life as it is, — unless you substitute the sober lessons of experience for the brilliant fancies of imagination, — will find your Baylen, where you will lie, crest-fallen and crushed, between the vices of your own nature and the evil influences of vicious society.

Up, then, with a heroic spirit, and gird yourself for

mortal conflict with the great Apollyon who bestrides your pathway! If he has subdued thousands, thousands have also subdued him. And you too may be his conqueror! Look courageously at the chart of your intended voyage! If, by every sunken rock, and beneath every dashing wave, there lies the wreck of youth who perished untimely, there is also a haven, beyond the sea, into which "*a thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands*" have triumphantly entered, in defiance of stormy winds and roaring waves. You may do the same, if you will take timely heed to your ways. Success is before you, if you resolutely and wisely seek it. As says a modern writer, "The seas of human life are wide. Wisdom may suggest the voyage, but it must first look to the condition of the ship, and the nature of the merchandise to exchange. Not every vessel that sails from Tarshish will bring back the gold of Ophir. But shall it therefore rot in the harbor? No! Give its sails to the wind!"

And so say I. Yield your young heart up cheerfully to the battle of life. Calculate upon difficulty;

but calculate also upon success ;— only be sure you do it wisely ! To aid you in this task, and to point out the safe road to eminence on earth and to glory in heaven, is the object of the succeeding chapters. Follow my counsels, and in your old age you will be like the trees in Alcinou's garden, which were covered with blossoms and laden with fruit at the same time ; in eternity, you will flourish as a choice plant, in the garden of God.

CHAPTER II.

THE CORNER-STONE OF A SUCCESSFUL LIFE.



RICH man once undertook to erect a magnificent mansion. With free and lavish expenditure, he raised its walls; and adorned it, within and without, to suit his taste. When finished, it was a stately and majestic pile of architecture. But, before it was ready for occupation, large apertures became visible in the walls. The floors and ceilings began to sink, and it was pronounced unsafe for habitation. The unwise owner had been in such unpardonable haste, as to neglect proper precautions in laying the foundation. He had built that massive structure upon an unsound surface, instead of digging down deep into the ground, after the solid rock. There was no rem-

edy, but to take it all down, and begin anew. This he was unable to do, having already exhausted a large proportion of his entire fortune in its construction. He was obliged, therefore, to leave it to decay and ruin,—to mourn at leisure over the irreparable folly he was too hasty and too thoughtless to avoid at the beginning.

I want the young man to give this, my simple parable, an application to his own life, since he is and must be engaged in the construction of a character for two worlds. His actions and motives are to compose its materials. These, as they accumulate, will give it form and subsistence. It will be good or evil—a shelter or a curse—according to their quality. Composed of evangelically virtuous and noble acts, it will afford quiet, honor and comfort, in this life; and in the life to come, an abode with the blessed. Composed of unprincipled and irreligious conduct, it will yield him unrest, shame, disgrace, in this world, and eternal infamy in the next.

How vastly important, then, for a young man to lay a foundation suited to the structure he designs

to erect! It would be the apex of folly to think of placing a virtuous superstructure upon a substructure of vice! I apprehend no sensible young man deliberately resolves to build a bad character. Yet many, who design to be *right* in the end, begin by indulging in follies, which they intend to repudiate at length. This is building on the sand; for whether they are aware of it or not, the structure is beginning to rise, and every day's actions add to its dimensions. Nevertheless, the foundation is unsound!

Other young men, who avoid these indulgences, and pride themselves on a spotless morality, are, notwithstanding all this, also building their characters on the sand! Why are they moral? Because they wish to be respectable! Why do they refrain from the wine-cup, the card-table, the theatre, the house of "*her whose feet take hold of death*"? Because they are *too proud* to be vicious. Why are they diligent, studious, careful of their reputation? Because they are ambitious of success in life. But what stability or solidity is there in pride or in ambition? Alas! they are but as the sand! The first rushing

flood of tempting circumstances may wash them, and the character that stands upon them, to utter destruction !

What, then, is the true foundation of character ? Where is that solid rock which will afford a firm resting-place for a virtuous life — a sure support for the noblest and most exalted character ?

To this question, so big with importance to every young man, I answer, in the notable language of St. Paul, “ *OTHER FOUNDATION can no man lay than that is laid, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST !* ” which means, that the corner-stone of everything truly noble in human character, of everything really great and honorable in human life, is a saving faith in Jesus Christ ! Without this, his earthly well-being is a “ dread uncertainty ; ” the “ blackness of darkness ” encircles his grave, and clouds his prospect of immortality. But with it, true to the teachings of the Divine Redeemer, he may be sure of rising to at least a tolerable degree of social eminence, to moderate plenty, to honor and immortal life.

The *temporal* advantages of an early religious life

are not sufficiently considered by most young men. They blindly conclude that success in this life is the exclusive heritage of the worldling ; that devotion to God is the surrender of present advantages, and the price of eternal salvation. Never was any supposition more false. It is contrary to both experience and Scripture. True, in the infancy of Christ's religion, and in seasons of persecution, the martyred confessor mounted his triumphal chariot, from the flames of his pyre, and won his crown of life by sacrificing all terrestrial things. But you, young man, live in a land whose institutions are moulded, and whose inhabitants are influenced, to a great extent, by the teachings of Jesus. Hence, you may safely calculate upon realizing the apostolic maxim, that "*Godliness is profitable for all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*" You may reasonably expect that, if you "*seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all these (worldly) things shall be added unto you.*"

The benefits of a pious life are beautifully exhib-

ited in the third chapter of Proverbs. There, religion is strikingly personified as a lovely woman standing at the portals of life's great highway, and greeting each joyous youth, as he enters, with charming words and alluring gifts. As he eagerly inquires after happiness, she exclaims, "*Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, (religion,) and the man that getteth understanding.*"

But the youth sees the glitter of gold, the sparkling of jewels, and the profits of merchandise, in tempting heaps, before him. His heart swells with nameless desires after the, as yet unknown, pleasures of sense. and he hesitates to submit to his beautiful teacher. To decide his unsettled mind, she adds: "*The merchandise of it (religion) is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies; and ALL THE THINGS THOU CANST DESIRE are not to be compared unto her!*"

This is promising much; but the eye of the youth lingers still on the sensuous and gaudy offerings of Sense and Mammon. His charmer, therefore, pro-

ceeds to say, “ *Length of days is in her right hand ; and in her left hand, RICHES AND HONOR ! Her ways are ways of pleasantness ; and all her paths are peace !* ”

Here are included health, long life, prosperity, eminence among men, tranquillity, and quietude of conscience, as the results of beginning life aright ; and, as if to meet the last wish of the most aspiring soul, she crowns this pyramid of blessings with a wreath from Paradise, exclaiming that, “ She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her ; ” by which is implied, that the blessed gifts of religion, in this world, are to be succeeded by a life of unending glory, in the next. Could more than this be offered ? Nay, there is nothing left to be desired. Only surrender your heart to the sway of piety, — approach your Creator, and entreat him to bind you to religion, with the soft bands of that love which “ many waters cannot quench,” — and you may view this world with that confidence which cries, “ *The Lord is my shepherd ; I shall not want ;* ” and the next, with that hope, which triumphantly exclaims, “ *If the earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved,* ”

we have a building, not made with hands, eternal, and in the heavens."

I do not affirm that a religious life is the *only* road to temporal prosperity and social superiority. Riches, honor, power, and long life, are often gained by men who are "an abomination in the sight of God." Superior genius will, of itself, win popular admiration, and command civic or political honors. Brilliant business talents will make their possessor a desirable and prosperous man. A strong physical constitution is favorable to longevity. And even duplicity, knavery, or overreaching in trade, may fill a man's coffers with unholy gain. Often, indeed, do the morally vile, the enemies of Christ, climb to the high places of earth. But their gain is their *portion*. Their advantage is apparent, and not real. Beneath a gay and attractive exterior, they carry a sad and heavy heart. To real contentment, to inward tranquillity, to genuine happiness, every godless man is an utter stranger, however high or brilliant may be his worldly position. What irreligious worldling, however proud his success, ever, in a candid moment,

made a profession of happiness, since the days of Cain? Not one! On the other hand, multitudes of the world's most honored and applauded heroes have groaned forth the lamentable cry, "Our misery is greater than we can endure!" amidst profusions of honors, riches, offices, and plaudits. Kings, princes, senators, philosophers, merchants, warriors, and orators, without number, when at the height of their ambition, have signed the declaration of that wise monarch, who said of this world, "*Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!*" Let me show you the hearts of some of these, as they are revealed in their own recorded confessions.

VOLTAIRE, one of the most brilliant of the sons of genius, whose friendship was courted by powerful kings, and whom the people delighted to honor, speaking of life, said, "Life is thickly sown with thorns; and I know of no other remedy than to pass quickly through them."

LORD CHESTERFIELD, a British nobleman, a man who made pleasure his chief pursuit, rich in titles, lands, wit, learning, and opportunity, after comparing

life to a dull, tasteless, and insipid journey, said, " As for myself, my course is already more than half passed over, and I mean to sleep in the coach the rest of the journey."

BYRON, that highly gifted but deeply sinning child of the Muses, describes human life in the following sorrowful lines :

" Alas ! it is delusion all ;
The future cheats us from afar,
Nor can we be what we recall,
Nor dare we think on what we are."

To these melancholy confessions we might add those of Nelson, Talleyrand, Randolph, and a host beside, who, in similar language, have given unequivocal testimony to the absolute impossibility of combining genuine enjoyment with a merely worldly life. And where is the young man who can envy the literary glory of Voltaire, the fashionable preëminence of Chesterfield, or the blazing lustre of Byron's genius, while he beholds the first so tortured with the thorns of life, the second so horrified with its ennui, the third so tormented with remorse and fear, that a

hasty flight, a blind forgetfulness, or a reckless leap into the great deep of consequences, is their highest consolation? Alas! how pitiful, how inexpressibly mournful, the sight, to see minds immortal so tormented, and so hopelessly wretched!

How beautiful is the contrast between the gloom of these brilliant worldlings and the lofty cheerfulness of the great Christian apostle! He ranked not, like them, with the lordly, the great, the royal; but was accounted as the "*the filth and offscouring of all things.*" His persecutions and sufferings rained on his head, and raged around his steps, in incomparable fury. Yet, there he stood, firmly and calmly, amidst the foaming of the storm, his feet resting on the solid rock of Christ's promise, his eyes fastened on the love and mercy of God, which, brighter and lovelier than the rainbow, spanned the heavens; his heart beating with the glad pulsations of immortal life, and his tongue giving utterance to the sublimest language of confidence, exclaiming, "*Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory!*" Tell me, young

man, if this noble bearing, this Divine triumph, under the sorest of present ills, is not of more value than all the pleasures of sense, the pomp of power, or the luxuries of wealth ! How infinitely preferable, therefore, must be a life consecrated to religion, in its prime, to a life of even profitable sin ! To every *innocent* gratification that earth can give to the senses, religion joins a sweet repose of spirit, which must be ever unknown to those whose souls are not in harmony with their Creator. For, as the ABBE MENNAIS has beautifully said, "While a sinful life engenders suffering, and a sorrow is always hidden at the bottom of a forbidden joy, — calmness, on the contrary, serenity, unvarying contentment, are the lot of a pure conscience. It resembles the sparrow, sweetly reposing in its nest, while the tempest abroad bends and breaks the tops of the forest."

Who has not heard of those triumphs of art and labor, by which the waters of the Croton and of Cochituate lake are made to flow, in iron arteries, through the streets, and into the very chambers of the citizens of two great American cities ? Let

suppose that these waters, by some mysterious change, become insipid, and even poisonous. Confusion, disappointment, and even intense suffering, are the immediate results. Amidst the universal dismay of such a misfortune, two men appear before the City Councils, with specifics for the healing of the waters.

“I,” affirms the first, “have a powder, a pinch of which will heal a gallon of the water, and render it sweet as before.”

The city fathers look joyfully at each other. Water is brought. The powder is infused with eager haste; each official sips a drop or two, and pronounces it delicious. The powder is equal to the claims of the inventor. Eulogy is exhausted in its praise. They inquire the price of this great discovery; and are about to conclude a contract for its purchase, when the second man steps up, saying:

“Gentlemen, I have a specific, which, cast into the springs of the lake or the river, will heal the whole forever!”

The city fathers are incredulous at first. But the man is earnest, and evidently sincere. He demands

a bond for an immense price, to be paid if he fulfills his promise. Otherwise, he asks nothing. Now, if these city-fathers were wise, with which of these men, think you, they would conclude a contract? Judge for them, young man, if they ought not, at almost any cost, to purchase the specific which would entirely remove the evil at once!

Need I make an application of this illustration? Can you not already perceive its force, and feel its bearing on yourself? Know you not that the heart, originally pure as the springs of Paradise, has become radically unclean?—that its natural streams "flow forth in bitterness exceeding the taste of aloes; and in pollution more vile than the spumy waves of a turbid sea? Hence, it follows that life becomes a "heritage of woe." To escape from this woe, every young immortal looks out of himself for help. Before him stands the genius of this world, inviting to the "*lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and to the pride of life.*" There, also, is the radiant form of Religion, inviting him to the cross of Christ, to virtue, and to heaven. The former dares not promise more

than occasional hours of delight; and makes no pretence to heal the springs of misery, which are ever sending their streams of sorrow through the life. The latter, like Elisha standing with his cruse of salt at the waters of Jericho, boldly promises to heal those springs, and to convert the heart into a living fountain of tranquil joy, capable of yielding sweet satisfaction under every variety of outward circumstance.

Say, then, young man, which is the choice of wisdom? As a mere question of advantage during the present life, ought you not to lay a foundation of evangelical piety? I appeal to the tribunal of your reason. I demand the verdict of your intellect. To enforce that, I implore the authority of your conscience. With your reason and conscience on the side of religion, I beg you to yield a submissive will! And, hearken! A higher voice than mine supports this appeal! From Him whom "*the heaven of heavens cannot contain*," a sound, "*still, small*," but thrilling, steals into every young man's heart, saying

“WILT THOU NOT, FROM THIS TIME, CRY UNTO ME, MY FATHER, THOU ART THE GUIDE OF MY YOUTH!”

Take heed how you despise this appeal of your Creator! Look at your life, in its relations to him, and to eternity! Contemplate your destinies from that “height which no duration limits,—where Hope spreads in immensity her indefatigable wings,—where you can feel within yourself a secret force, which bears you above all time, as a light body rises from the depth of the sea. From this height, look into this narrow valley, where the first term of your existence is to be accomplished.” And thus, with both worlds before you, come to the great decision to lay your foundation surely and steadfastly on Him who is the “Rock of ages.”

To be successful in life, to rise above the common herd of mankind, a young man requires certain elements of character;—all of which are attainable through the power of religion, and many of which most young men never will attain without that power. He must possess INTEGRITY, that he may win public confidence; INTELLIGENCE, that he may command re-

spect ; INDUSTRY, that he may collect honey from the flowers of trade ; ECONOMY and frugality, to preserve his gains ; ENERGY, by which to surmount obstacles ; and TACT, to enable him to adapt himself to the openings of Providence, and to make him the man for the hour of opportunity. These qualifications are, to success in life, as foundations of jasper to a royal palace. Whoever possesses them cannot be an inferior man. To that man who retains them, life cannot be a failure. Nay, he must rise to social superiority ; he must win a commanding influence. And, hear me, young man ! These elements of success are all attainable, in a greater or less degree, by every youth who will cordially embrace, and faithfully adhere to, the religion of Christ ; as I will endeavor to prove, in the succeeding chapters.

CHAPTER III.

INTEGRITY NECESSARY TO SUCCESS IN LIFE.



INTEGRITY signifies incorruptibility, soundness of heart, uprightness. A man of integrity is always loyal to his sense of right. His adhesion to the principles of rectitude is so strong, that nothing can break it. No motive is sufficiently powerful to move him from the straight line of duty. Money cannot purchase his consent to a wrong action. Pleasure cannot entice him from the ways of justice. The pleadings of love, the yearnings of friendship, the threatenings of enmity, are alike powerless to move his steady soul from its purpose to abide faithful to its convictions. To the wicked in high places, who would flatter him to turn aside from truth, for the

sake of their favor, he indignantly responds, "Shall I sell my principles for human praise?— for that

" ' Wild wreath of air,
That flake of rainbow, flying on the highest
 Foam of men's deeds?'"

Ever true to his principles, his *actions* and his *duties* are as —

"Consonant chords that shiver to one note."

If duty calls him to rise up singly in defence of truth, like Noah preaching to a world of sinners, he stands, in the noblest sublimity of moral character,

"Like a Druid rock,
 Or like a spire of land, that stands apart,
 Cleft from the main."

If exposed to the wrath and violence of ungodly men, — if the enemies of right raise threatening tempests about his head, — if they pour forth floods of enmity to wash him from his high moral position, — he remains unmoved and unawed at his chosen post:

"Standing like a stately pine,
 Set in a cataract on an island crag,
 When storm is on the heights, and right and left,
 Sucked from the dark heart of the long hills, roll
 The torrents dashed to the vale."

The reply of Kossuth, the renowned hero of Hungary, furnishes a beautiful illustration of this virtue. He had escaped the pursuit of the triumphant Cosacks, and sought protection at the hands of the Sultan of Turkey. Safety, wealth, military command, were cheerfully offered to him by the Sultan, provided he would renounce the Christian religion, and embrace the doctrines of Mohammed. To refuse this condition would, for aught he knew to the contrary, be equivalent to throwing himself upon the sword of Russia, which was whetted for his destruction. But, with death frowning in his face, the heroic Kossuth nobly exclaimed, "Welcome, if need be, the axe or the gibbet; but curses on the tongue that dares to make to me so infamous a proposal!"

In this fact, you see both the nature and the moral sublimity of integrity. The soul of Kossuth, long trained to a love of truth and right, revolted, with indignation, from the bare idea of purchasing his life by the sacrifice of his conscience. To die loyal to his sense of duty, however cruel the mode of his death, he regarded as infinitely preferable to life, honors,

and wealth, with a violated conscience. This is integrity.

An equally striking example is furnished, in the conduct of Ulric Zwingle, the illustrious master spirit of the Swiss Reformation. The Pope had given Zwingle a small pension, and his legate was endeavoring to combat certain scruples which the nascent reformer indulged on the question of retaining it. The spirit of reform was beginning to stir within him, and a dim presentiment of his ultimate duty to attack the Papacy was slowly rising in his soul. Hence, he wished to be released from all ties which would hinder the freedom of his great mind. But the papal legate insisted, and Zwingle consented to retain it a while longer, but added these notable words :

“ Do not think that for any money I will suppress a single syllable of the truth ! ”

Noble Zwingle ! Glorious loyalty to the sense of duty, which not all the wealth of the Vatican can induce to surrender even a *syllable of truth* ! Young man, this, too, is integrity !

At the risk of being too profuse in my illustrations

of this point, I will introduce yet another, and, perhaps, more striking exhibition of this essential virtue.

The interest of the circumstances, and the hope that the moral beauty they disclose may strengthen the young man's allegiance to right, shall be my apology.

The government of Scotland had, for generations, claimed a jurisdiction over the pulpits of the Scottish Church, which the latter could not conscientiously yield. A recent enforcement of this ancient claim, in a particular church, followed by abortive efforts to secure a reform, led several of its most celebrated ministers to a determination to quit the assembly, resign their churches, and organize a free church, independent of all state control. The execution of this purpose involved the sacrifice of their livings, manses, and means of support. It would leave many of them poor, houseless, and dependent on the Providence of God alone for support. The adherents of the state sneered at this resolve, and said there was no fear that many of them would make such a sacrifice for a mere scruple of conscience. The 18th of

May, 1843, however, proved to Scotland and to the world that the spirit of the ancient Scottish Covenanter yet lived in the heart of her modern sons. Let us view the scene as it transpired on that memorable day, in the city of Edinburgh.

The gray old towers of Holyrood are alive with the bustle and grandeur of reflected royalty. The narrow streets are crowded with dense masses, through which the gorgeous procession of the queen's commissioner can scarcely force its way to the cathedral church of St. Giles. The levee and sermon past, the royal commissioner proceeds to St. Andrew's, to meet the General Assembly. Amidst the anxious beatings of many hearts, the house is called to order.

Prayer is next offered, and is followed by a brief, deep silence. Then, the polished and classic Welsh, who is moderator, "his pure and glowing spirit shining through his fragile body, like a lamp through a vase of alabaster," rises to his seat. With a firm, unfaltering voice, he utters a noble protest against the proceedings of the state. Then, laying his pro-

test on the table, and bowing to the commissioner, he walks toward the eastern door. This movement raises the interest of the assembly to its highest pitch ; for, who could say how many would abide true to principle and right, in that stern hour of trial ? Who will follow the dauntless Welsh ? First, the white-haired Chalmers, with his "massive frame and lion port, springs to his side." Another and another of Scotland's most distinguished clergy follow him, until the pride and flower of the church swell the gathering stream. As they pour out of the church, "a long-drawn sobbing sigh, a suppressed cheer of admiration and sympathy, sweeps round the church," from the spectators, who gaze in solemn wonder at the sight. Dismay and astonishment mark the countenances of the royal commissioner, and the adherents of the crown.

Outside of the church the excitement is still more intense. Vast masses have waited there, for hours, to see if the spirit of the old Covenanter yet lived in Scotland. "When will they come ?" has been asked a thousand times.

“They will *not* come!” has been as often answered back by those who had no faith in the power of principle.

“They *will* come!” has been the response of the old Covenanter soul.

At length, a door opens,— a cry of “Here they come!” announces to the multitude, and to the world, that the Evangelical Church of Scotland is free! Instantly, the whole mass of people is in motion. Hats and handkerchiefs are waved aloft, and “a shout, not loud, but deep and earnest,— a shout, the voice of the heart rather than of the lip, bursts from the countless thousands” who throng street, door, window, and even house-top. The long agony is over. The church is safe. Strong men, who had faced the roar of battle unmoved, are unstrung, and the big tears gush from their eyes, as they murmur, “Thank God, Scotland is free!” “Four hundred of Scotland’s best ministers, and as many elders, march through that yielding crowd to Tanfield Hall, which is crowded to the roof by eager spectators. There, the tremulous voice of Welsh leads

in prayer, and the long pent up feelings of the assembly burst forth in irrepressible sobs, and tears of mingled sorrow and gladness. Then, that multitude stands up, and from "four thousand voices there ascend the high and mournful strains of the old Hebrew faith and fearlessness."

"God is our refuge and our strength,
In straits a present aid ;
Therefore, although the earth remove,
We will not be afraid."

The towers of the Cannon mills shake with the thunder of their melody ; and every heart is nerved with holy fervor to lay down all for the cross and crown of Christ.*

The moral grandeur of this scene is, at least, equal to any recorded facts in the history of man ! It exhibits the moral beauty of integrity. The scene owes all its sublimity to the fact that those heroic ministers were sufficiently loyal to their sense of right and duty to prefer the loss of all things to its violation. And, young man, this is the integrity I

* See Hetherington's History of the Church of Scotland.

wish you to attain, as a prime element of success in life.

One of the first effects of integrity is to secure to its possessor the *confidence* of society. To have the confidence of others, is to have influence over them; for men readily yield themselves to the guidance of those in whom they confide. Hence, a reputation for lofty integrity is a better capital than gold; — it is more persuasive than eloquence; — it is more powerful than the sword. A remarkable example of its influence is furnished in the rivalry of Robespierre and Mirabeau, during the first epochs of the French Revolution.

No two men, perhaps, ever presented greater contrasts of person, ability, and character, than these politicians. Mirabeau was of patrician blood; Robespierre, an obscure plebeian. Mirabeau had the eye of an eagle, the port of a lion, the energy of a whirlwind, a voice of thunder, an eloquence which stirred men's souls, commanded the assent of his friends, and terrified his adversaries. Robespierre's eyes flashed no fire, his manner was feeble and

uncouth, his voice weak and broken, his oratory was contemptible, and usually passionless. Between such men, one would think, there could be no rivalry for, how could Robespierre, vain as he was, dare to compete for influence with Mirabeau? But he did dare; and that, too, with success, as will appear by the following scene, which took place in the celebrated Revolutionary Club of the Jacobins, where hitherto Mirabeau had reigned supreme.

Robespierre was speaking, one night, in the club, against a decree, which, through Mirabeau's influence, had that day passed the National Assembly. Though cold and passionless in his manner, he, nevertheless, brought such severe logic to bear against the principles of the decree, that the club greeted him with thunders of applause. Mirabeau is alarmed. He sits uneasy in his presidential chair, and at length calls Robespierre to order, saying, "No one must speak against a decree already passed by the Assembly!"

This, the club will not endure. Loud shouts for Robespierre to proceed resound through the hall.

Mirabeau mounts his chair, and affirming that the attack on the decree was intended to cover an assault upon himself, appeals to his friends, crying, “Help, colleagues! Let all my friends surround me!”

This was manifestly an appeal to his influence over the club. A few months before, it would have brought a rampart of some six hundred human breasts around him. But that night, only *thirty* responded to his call! It was obvious that his influence had passed over to Robespierre.

What was the secret of this change? Let the young man note it carefully. Mirabeau had accepted royal gold; — his political integrity had become suspected; — and all his high qualifications were growing impotent. Robespierre, — cold, selfish, calculating, repulsive, as he was, — had contrived to acquire a reputation for incorruptibility. Men believed that no price could purchase his allegiance to republican principles; hence, they freely surrendered themselves up to his influence, until they placed him at the head of that fearful and barbarous revolution; proving

that, even among unprincipled men, there is a respect for integrity which moulds and leads them.

Let me exhort you, therefore, young man, to cultivate the loftiest integrity, even in connection with the smallest matters. Are you a clerk? See to it that your minutest entries are strictly correct. That you never appropriate one cent of your employer's money or property to your own uses. Deal with honorable exactness toward all who trade at your store or counting-room. Eschew all *business lies*, in selling goods. If, in measuring or weighing an article, you discern defects which lessen its value, boldly make them known. Do not permit a dishonest employer to compel you to be his instrument, — his tool for doing wrong. Let him distinctly understand that *you* do not hesitate between dishonor and dismissal. Prove, if need be, by the loss of your situation, that you prefer an honest crust to a dishonest banquet. If you are a mechanic, a farmer, or an artist, prosecute your daily tasks with the same careful diligence in the absence, as in the presence, of your employer; thus proving that you are "*no eye-servant*," no mere

"*man-pleaser*," but a conscientious and dignified young man ; doing right, not for reputation's sake, but because you love it, and from a sense of obligation to Almighty God.

It is by *small things* that you are to acquire a habit of integrity. The disposition of mankind is to despise the little incidents of every-day life. This is a lamentable mistake ; since nothing in this life is really small. Every event is "great, for good or for evil ; because of the unfathomable mysteries that lie shrouded in the growth on earth of an immortal soul." It is only by exercising your principles in the daily tests of ordinary life that you can acquire power to stand in an extraordinary and truly difficult position. It was only by habitual fidelity to his sense of duty, that Luther or Zwingle acquired strength to withstand the flattering solicitations of the Pope. None but a mind trained, through daily tests, to an instinctive choice of right, could, like Kossuth, so promptly and unhesitatingly accept the gibbet or axe as the price of integrity. Any other mind would have paused, hesitated, employed mental casuistry, and looked, a

least, after some excuse for yielding a principle and saving life. But Kossuth's mind settled the question as soon as it was stated ; and thus showed itself loyal, from long habit, to virtue and to truth. Be faithful, therefore, in that which is least ; thereby acquiring the power to be faithful in that which is great, should you ever be called to such a trial of your principles.

Let us enter yonder counting-room. A clerk is busy at the writing-desk. The merchant sits conversing at the table with a brother merchant. The porter calls the clerk from the counting-room. As the door closes, the visiting merchant inquires of his friend,

“Is that your chief clerk, Mr. Grey ?”

“Yes, sir. He is at the head of my establishment,” replies the merchant.

“Indeed ! Are you not afraid to intrust so young a man with so high a responsibility ?”

Mr. Grey smiles, and answers,

“No, sir. That young man has my most implicit confidence. He has been with me from his boyhood. I have never known him to betray a single trust. He identifies his interests with mine. He abhors the

idea of mercantile dishonesty in every aspect ; and I would intrust him with uncounted gold."

" You are fortunate to have such a clerk. Depend upon it, there are few such in our city," replies the merchant's friend, as, deeply musing, he retires from the counting-room. The conversation has strongly impressed his mind. He conducts an extensive business ; and, being somewhat advanced in life, is desirous of finding a young partner. The high commendation of Mr. Grey's clerk has fixed his attention. He resolves to observe him, and, at a suitable opportunity, if satisfied, secure his services. The result is, that the young clerk becomes first his partner, and subsequently the owner of the business ; thus securing profit and advancement, as the reward of his integrity.

Now, I do not say that every young man of sound principles will be equally fortunate ; because capacity, address, and other elements, must be combined, to insure such marked and signal elevation. Yet, I do not hesitate to affirm, that every young man who resembles that clerk in his uprightness of

character may be sure of rising to a loftier height in his profession, and to more enduring fortune, than if his principles are loose, and his fidelity open to suspicion.

In some of the European states, scientific men have recommended the insertion of lightning-rods in quarries, for the purpose of attracting the electric fluid during a thunder-storm, and thereby blasting the rock. The relation of those rods to the splitting of a stone fitly illustrates the influence of dishonesty, trickery in trade, or over-reaching in any form, upon the fame and fortune of the clerk, or merchant, who condescends to its practice. Every such violation of the laws of right serves as a conductor to the retributive providences of the Creator, which, sooner or later, shiver the fabric built up by fraud into fragments. The late Gideon Lee, a celebrated American merchant, and an honest man, was accustomed to remark, that, though "a man may obtain a temporary advantage by selling an article for more than it is worth, yet the effect must recoil upon himself, in the shape of bad debts and increased risk." The

following fact, in his history, is given to illustrate his opinion :

A merchant boasted, one day, in Mr. Lee's office, of having gained a great advantage over a neighbor; and then, with the utmost barefacedness, added, "To-day, I have obtained an advantage over you, too, Mr. Lee!"

"Well!" replied the honest man, "that may be; - but, if you will promise never to enter my office again, I will give you that bundle of goat-skins."

The unprincipled trader was so devoid of all self-respect, that he made the promise, took the skins, and for fifteen years did not cross Mr. Lee's threshold. At the expiration of that period, however, he walked into his office. Mr. Lee instantly recognized him, and said: "You have violated your word; pay me for the goat-skins!"

"O!" replied the man, in sorrowful tones, "I have been very unfortunate since I saw you, and am quite poor."

"Yes," said the man of probity; "and you will

always be so; that miserable desire to overreach others must keep you so." *

Thus, you may see that the providence of God has joined ultimate adversity to all violations of the law of justice, just as he has united honor and well-being with integrity. The motive, therefore, is two-fold, — one of fear, and another of attraction. Honor, advancement, well-being, with their rich emoluments, stand inviting you to the ways of right; while disgrace, debasement and ruin, stand frowning in the paths of deceit and dishonesty. God himself speaks to you, saying: "*The house of the wicked shall be overthrown; but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish.*"

You are doubtless convinced of the beauty, the benefit, the desirableness, of this vital element of genuine success in life. Perhaps, you have inwardly resolved to cultivate it. Animated by the examples, pleased with the beauty, attracted by the benefits, of integrity, you have already said, in your heart: "I will diligently cultivate this sublime virtue! With

* Quoted in Hunt's Merchants' Magazine.

Kossuth, Zwingle, and those noble Scotsmen, I will hold my integrity dearer than money, honor, or life!"

This is a noble resolve; but how will you keep it? Whence, amid the contagion of evil example, the lure of the apparent rewards of deceit, and the insatiable desires of your own fiery heart,—which will soon be as eager, in the strife for fame and fortune, as Hotspur in the battle-field,—whence will you gain strength to resist all these temptations? By what aids do you intend to remain conqueror on a field where millions have fallen? Consider well the question of Jesus, who asks, "*What king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand, to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?*" So you, counting the difficulties surrounding a young combatant after an upright reputation, should seriously ask—"Have I strength to overcome these obstacles?"

Now, I will not deny the obvious fact, that a few persons have won a high mercantile reputation with-

out the aid of experimental religion. Pride of birth, of character, of education, a strong instinctive admiration of mercantile justice, freedom from the pressure of strong solicitation, with other causes, may have sustained them under their circumstances ; but I contend that no young man can rationally hope to pass the ordeals of life in safety, unless his outward virtues derive vitality and vigor from an inward religious life. To be perennial, the stream must proceed from a living spring ; to be fruitful, the tree must spread its roots in a congenial soil : so, to insure the possession of uprightness through the manifold trials of human life, the soul of a man must be in harmony with its Creator, — through faith in Him, it must derive strength to resist wrong, to desire and to will right, when standing in the plunging torrent of evil influences which is ever dashing down the highways of trade. Greatly good men are always “ like solitary towers in the city of God ; and secret passages, running deep beneath external nature, give their thoughts intercourse with higher intelligences, which strengthens and controls them ; ” and this secret intercourse

with God is necessary for you, if to be greatly good is your aim and purpose.

Religion never fails to make its possessor a man of integrity. Its primary idea is a surrender of the man, soul and body, to God and to his teachings. A deliberate casting off of any one moral principle, known to be a Divine precept, is an act of apostasy from religion. It is a disavowal of the previous act of surrender, a violation of the sacred covenant. Hence, religion and integrity are as inseparable as a cause and its sequence. To embrace the former, is, of necessity, to secure the latter. To yield fully to the indwelling Spirit, who chooses the religious heart for his temple, is to be in a state where the loftiest and sublimest integrity is "spontaneous and inevitable, the outward blossoming and fruitfulness of a heavenly life. It is like the skylark's hymn, the violet's fragrance, the breath of the sweet south, the morning star's sweet effulgence. The soul obeys the desires of her Divine Lord with the ineffable delight, tenderness and constancy, of the bride." *

* Rev. T. L. Harris.

Religion should, therefore, be your first object of pursuit, if you desire to wear the ornament of an upright character. Place yourself in the hands of Jesus Christ. Yield your spirit, as an instrument of power, to the touch of his fingers, and suffer him to call forth its delightful harmonies. Let his power be your dependence ; his grace your strength. Thus will your moral sense be keen, clear, sensitive ; your moral power, equal to the most powerful tests ; your integrity, of the purest character ; and your success in life greatly promoted.

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CHAPTER IV.

INTELLIGENCE AN ELEMENT OF SUCCESS IN LIFE.



THINK it is the Germans who have a pretty legend, of a gentleman for whom some enamored fairy wrought a precious talisman, which had the power to attract all persons who came near the wearer to himself. The charm wrought powerfully on the companions of the fortunate nobleman; and he was loved with wondrous affection by a large circle of admiring friends.

If such a talisman were attainable, at the cost of much labor, suffering, and even of danger, many a young man would seek it with incredible industry. His imagination would be charmed by the idea. He would be ready to attempt the ascent of the Andes,

or the exploration of the dreary realms of the Ice King, around the poles.

But when that same young man is told that, unless neutralized by moral deficiencies, *knowledge* is really a precious talisman, commanding the respect and influencing the opinions and conduct of all minds within his sphere of action,—elevating its possessor to influence, to honor, and, possibly, to fortune,—he turns away with apathy, perhaps with scorn. He despairs mental toil. However physically industrious he may be, he is intellectually too lazy to read, reflect, and study. Books are the objects of his fixed dislike. He would be delighted to wield a commanding influence, to make a deep mark in the world ; but, he is too slothful, too sensuous, to prosecute the studies, which, by expanding, strengthening, and developing the intellect, lead to high achievements and eminence. He prefers to waste his leisure hours in idle lounging, in frivolous amusement, in unprofitable companionships. What is the consequence ? It requires no prophetic afflatus to predict

that such a young man will spend his days in comparative obscurity,— that on his

“Grassy grave

The men of future times will careless tread,
And read his name upon the sculptured stone ;
Nor will the sound, familiar to their ears,
Recall his vanished memory.”

The mind is the glory of the man. The power of the countenance to attract depends more on the thoughtfulness of the soul than upon its conformity to the laws of beauty. The utmost elegance of physical formation, the most lovely and delicately chiselled features, unless accompanied by high intellectual expression, cease to please, after they become familiar; while “dignity robes the man who is filled with a lofty thought,” notwithstanding the symmetry of his features may be imperfect, and the proportions of his form unequal. And, seeing how much of success in life often depends upon outward impressions, it is important to a young man to robe himself in the attractive dignity of thought.

Next to moral worth, no possession is so productive

of real influence as a highly cultivated intellect. Wealth, birth, and official station, may, and do, secure to their possessors an external, superficial courtesy ; but they never did, and they never can, command the reverence of the heart. Fear of being injured by power, and hope of being benefited by wealth, induce men to offer the incense of servility at the shrines of Mammon. But it is only to the man of large and noble soul, to him who blends a cultivated mind with an upright heart, that men yield the tribute of deep and genuine respect. Mental superiority has often commanded the friendship of courts and kings. It has elevated the plebeian above the patrician. What star ever shone with purer light, or commanded more admiration, in the brilliant court of France, than the plain, republican, but cultivated, Benjamin Franklin ? Who ever rose to higher influence in the political circles of proud England than Cromwell, Eldon, Burke, Canning, and Brougham ? To what did they owe their vast influence, but to great intellectual power, developed by slow and toilsome cultivation ? Is the young man ambitious of

high success in life? Does he aspire to rival great names? Then, let him diligently cultivate his intellect.

Yonder, on the calm, moonlit sea, gliding in solemn majesty over the unruffled waters, is a splendid ship. Among the dark forms upon her deck, may be discerned a pale-faced boy, some sixteen summers old. He is leaning over the bulwarks, absorbed in a dreamy reverie. His imagination is traversing the future of his career. Filled with the gay illusions of hope, he peoples the years to come with images of success. He beholds himself rising from post to post, in his dangerous profession, until he fancies himself the commander of a great fleet. He wins brilliant victories; wealth, honors, fame, surround him. He is a great man. His name is in the mouth of the world. There is a circle of glory round his brow. Filled with the idea, he starts! His young heart heaving with great purposes, his eyes gleaming with the fire of his enkindled soul, his slender form expanding to its utmost height, and his lips moving with energy,—he paces the silent

deck, exclaiming, "I will be a hero; and, confiding in Providence, I will brave every danger!"

Such was the romantic dream of young Horatio Nelson; afterwards, the hero of the Nile, the victor of Trafalgar, and the greatest naval commander in the world! And what young man has not had imaginings equally romantic? Where is the poor sailor-boy who has not dreamed of glory and greatness? What young law student has not seen in himself a future Littleton, Coke, or Story? Where is the printer's apprentice who has not intended to be a Franklin? What young mechanic has not, in fancy, written his name beside the names of Arkwright, Fulton, or Rumford? What boyish artist has not, in imagination, rivalled Raphael or Michael Angelo? What youthful orator has not gathered the glory of Burke, Chatham, or Patrick Henry, around his own name? Nay! There never was a young man, of any advantages, who did not rise to eminent success, in his hours of reverie. For, youth is the period of dreams, in which Queen Mab, with her fairy crew, holds undisputed reign over the imagina-

tion, and revels at will in the hall of fancy, in the palace of the soul.

But why, since *all* dream of greatness, do so few attain it? Why stand Nelson, Story, Fulton, Burke, &c., alone, in the realization of their imaginings, among ten thousand of their peers, whose early dreams were as bright and as vivid as their own? Why do so few young men distinguish themselves, out of the many whose hopes, purposes and resolves, are as radiant as the colors of the rainbow?

The answer is obvious. Young men are not willing to devote themselves to that process of slow, toilsome self-culture, which is the price of great success. Could they soar to eminence on the lazy wings of genius, the world would be filled with great men. But this can never be; for, whatever aptitude for particular pursuits Nature may donate to her favorite children, she conducts none but the laborious and the studious to distinction. Cicero and Demosthenes, those unrivalled orators of antiquity, were diligent students. Sir William Jones, the greatest of oriental scholars; Newton, the first of philosophers; Burke

the chief of modern orators ; Michael Angelo, the model of artists ; Haydn and Handel, those peerless masters of the musical art ; John Quincy Adams, the diplomatist and statesman ; all mounted the throne of their fame step by step. Their glory gathered around them by degrees. Each added ray was the result of intense application. It was not genius, so much as **GENIUS SEDULOUSLY CULTIVATED**, that enabled them to write their names so high on the pillar of fame. Great men have ever been men of thought, as well as men of action. As the magnificent river, rolling in the pride of its mighty waters, owes its greatness to the hidden springs of the mountain nook, so does the wide-sweeping influence of distinguished men date its origin from hours of privacy, resolutely employed in efforts after self-development. The invisible spring of self-culture is the source of every great achievement.

Away, then, young man, with all dreams of superiority unless you are determined to dig after knowledge, as men search for concealed gold ! If you lack the resolution, the manly strength of purpose,

needed to bind you to reading, reflection, and study, you may bid adieu to all hope of marked success. Your destiny is settled. You will dwell in ignoble nothingness, far down the vale of obscurity. Your name will be "writ in water."

Yet, why need you surrender all your cherished hopes of distinction ? The assured fact that the great mass of the young men of your age will spend their youth in frivolity and self-neglect, gives the individual who is determined to be a fully developed man the greater certainty of rising above his peers. Resolve, therefore, to act a part worthy of that intellect with which God has endowed you ! Dare to contend for the palm of superiority !

Success is certain, if you do your best ; as says an eccentric writer, " Show me the man who has made the most of his faculties, and I will show you a being sublimated to the height of the angelic nature." This is strongly expressed ; but it nevertheless contains a great truth. Every man has in himself the seminal principle of great excellency. The reader

has it; and he may develop it by cultivation, if he will **TRY**.

Perhaps you are what the world calls *poor*. What of that? Most of the men whose names are as household words were also the children of poverty. Captain Cook, the circumnavigator of the globe, was born in a mud hut, and started in life as a cabin-boy. Nelson, England's greatest admiral, was only a coxswain in his youth. Lord Eldon, who sat on the woolsack, in the British Parliament, for nearly half a century, was the son of a coal-merchant. Franklin, the philosopher, diplomatist, and statesman, was but a poor printer's boy, whose highest luxury, at one time, was only a penny roll, eaten in the streets of Philadelphia. Ferguson, the profound philosopher, was the son of a half-starved weaver. Heyne, the renowned German scholiast, was born in a poor peasant's cot. Burns, the bard of Scotland, ate the coarse bread of labor. The lamented Kirke White, the youthful poet, was the son of a butcher. Whitefield, the most renowned of pulpit orators, was the son of a tavern-keeper. John Wesley, the greatest

ecclesiastical legislator of his age, was the son of a poor village vicar, whose scanty income scarce sustained his numerous children. Johnson, Goldsmith, Coleridge, Keats, Crabbe, all knew the pressure of limited circumstances. Yet, they made themselves a name. They, with many others, have demonstrated that limited means, or poverty even, is no insuperable obstacle to success. Their history shows that the most stupendous difficulties may be defied and conquered by steadily and perseveringly cultivating the mind ; and thus fitting it beforehand for the openings of Divine Providence. Poesy never sang more truly than in the following beautiful lines of Longfellow, in his " Psalm of Life : "

" Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time ;

" Footprints that, perhaps, another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, may take heart again."

Up, then, young man, and gird yourself for the

work of self-cultivation! Set a high price on your leisure moments. They are sands of precious gold. Properly expended, they will procure for you a stock of great thoughts,—thoughts that will fill, stir, invigorate, and expand your soul. Seize also on the unparalleled aids furnished by steam and type, in this unequalled age. The great thoughts of great men are now to be procured at prices almost nominal. Therefore, you can easily collect a library of choice authors. Public lectures are also abundant in our large cities. Attend the best of them, and carefully treasure up their richest ideas. But, above all, learn to reflect even more than you read. Reading is to the mind what eating is to the body; and reflection is similar to digestion. To eat, without giving nature time to assimilate the food to herself by the slower process of digestion, is to deprive her, first, of health, and then, of life; so, to cram the intellect by reading, without due reflection, is to weaken and paralyze the mind. He who reads thus has “his perceptions dazzled and confused by the multitude of images presented to them. And this, because he has not the

faculty of pausing at every point of interest; of weighing, searching, and questioning; of arbitrating between truth and the author; of improving hints, and verifying conclusions. Without thought, books are the sepulchres of the soul. They not only immure it, but, like thieves in the candle, while they obscure its light, they consume the bodily substance, and so hasten its dissolution.* But, let thought and reading go hand in hand, and the intellect will rapidly increase in strength and in gifts. Its possessor will rise in character, in potentiality, in positive influence. His success, his moral qualities being equal, will be assured.

But here I have reached a point of the highest importance to every young man. And that point is, the necessity of religion to give right direction to the cultivated intellect. Mental power alone is not a guaranty of innocent and virtuous superiority. A life of study gave the philosophic Bacon power and renown; but the absence of religious principle left him to disgraceful deeds, which will dim the lustre

* Self-formation.

of his fame forever. Men will honor his intellect, but despise his heart. So of Lord Byron, Rousseau, Voltaire, and others. Education is as a mighty steam-engine to a ship,—it gives her power;—skillfully regulated, it enables her to mount the loftiest wave, and wage successful war with the fiercest storm; directed by violence and hate, it makes her powerful to destroy; submitted to ignorance, it carries her to destruction on the rock, or rends her to fragments in mid air. Thus, education, controlled by rectitude, is powerful for good; swayed by depravity, it spreads destruction over society, and destroys its possessor. Tennyson thus beautifully paints an educated mind unsanctified by the spirit of God. He calls it

“A sinful soul, possessed of many gifts;
 A spacious garden, full of flowering weeds;
 A glorious devil, large in heart and brain,
 That did love beauty only, (beauty seen
 In all varieties of mould and mind,)
 And knowledge for its beauty; or, if good,
 Only for its beauty.”

Permit me to conduct you to an English village

as it appeared some two hundred years ago. As your eye wanders among its ancient cottages, with huge gable ends and roofs of thatched straw, let it rest upon a group of young men, surrounding one whose mean dress and bag of tools proclaim him to belong to the humble fraternity of travelling tinkers. He is the chief speaker; and his conversation is remarkable only for its extravagant profanity. With a vulgar air, and a boisterous manner, he rolls out a filthy stream of oaths from the fountain of a deeply polluted spirit. Suddenly, however, his vile speech is arrested by the presence of a low, forbidding creature. An old, wrinkled crone, with little, twinkling eyes, a cracked voice, and a hand resting on each hip, pushes her way through the group, and, gazing earnestly in the blasphemer's face, exclaims,

“ You curse and swear at such an ungodly rate, that I tremble to hear you! You are the ungodliest person for swearing I ever heard in my whole life!”

The young sinner stands amazed and stricken under this rebuke; for, the reprover is herself notorious for vulgarity and cursing. Deep, big thoughts

rush through his startled soul; he inwardly, but sternly, resolves to be a better man. That day's events form an epoch in his life. Ere long, it becomes known that the swearing tinker is transformed into the exemplary Christian. Soon, his voice is heard preaching Christ. Persecution breaks forth against him. The harpies of bigotry hunt him from the pulpit to the prison. For twelve years he lies confined in a miserable dungeon, whose walls are ever dripping with damp, for the notable offence of preaching the Gospel! But, from that dim apartment, he sends forth a book, whose original conception, grand and beautiful imagery, touching pathos, purity of style, and truthfulness to nature and experience, give its author an almost unrivalled fame. And to-day, the tomb of John Bunyan, the converted tinker, the author of the Pilgrim's Progress, is sought out by the loftiest sons of genius, who stand upon the sweet dreamer's ashes, and sigh for the inspiration which gave enchantment to his pen.

The point, in this illustration, which it is import-

ant to the young man to notice, is, that it was religion which called the hidden powers of Bunyan's intellect into exercise, and directed them to a holy end. But for religion, instead of being a star of surpassing beauty, shedding the purest rays of soft and holy light on the human intellect, he would have lived a loathsome human reptile, crawling in the dust, and spitting the venom of death upon mankind. *He would have died*

" Silent, unseen, unnoticed, unlamented."

To religion, therefore, as the grand stimulant, the mighty developing agent, of the human intellect, should every young man direct his fixed attention. A power of unknown extent resides in its great ideas. Great thoughts always stir the attentive mind, just as high winds cause the thick leaves of the tree to rustle. They enlarge it, too. The soul of a philosopher lives in a wider sphere, and experiences nobler emotions, than the soul of a peasant, only because it has become conversant with the grandeur of the universe. Let the peasant employ the same means,

and his confined spirit, bursting the cerements of its intellectual sepulchre, will sear freely into realms of glorious thought. But religion brings the soul into contact with loftier and grander ideas than belong to the province of philosophy. Before the gaze of a seeker after Christ, it unfolds the sublime idea of God. It leads forth the awakened mind, from the narrow boundaries of worldly thought, into the vastness of the INFINITE ; and bids it stretch its powers in the attempt to comprehend ETERNITY ! It reveals to the mind the consciousness of its own immortality ; to its moral perceptions it unfolds the stern grandeur of immutable justice, the tremendous results of evil, and the transcendent beauty of holiness. To soothe its fears and attract its hopes, it displays the idea of Love, as manifested in the character and death of the great God-man, Jesus Christ !

It is impossible for the most stultified intellect to be brought into contact with these overwhelming thoughts, without being awakened from its slumbers, and startled into action. Hence, the introduction of

the Christian religion to a nation is the epoch of its mental birth; and the entrance upon a spiritual life has proved the birth-hour of a new intellectual life to thousands of individual Christians. It is the fault of its recipients that it is not so to all.

Religion also *strengthens*, as well as awakens, the intellect. Its primary condition — faith in Christ — requires the highest exercise of the powers of abstraction and attention. For faith is the trustful gaze of the soul on the face of Jesus Christ, — the concentration of a sinner's mind and heart on the idea of a sin-forgiving God. It necessarily involves the exercise of complete *abstraction*, and powerful *attention*. As this faith is required to be habitual, its operations must strengthen these important faculties. Besides this, religion leads to the study of that great book, the Bible. Here are found the seeds of impregnating, healthy thought; — the sublimest poetry, the purest history, the most touching biography, and the profoundest philosophy. The study of these excellences naturally leads to that of collateral history, and to the highest exercises of the intellect.

so that it is impossible for a believer in Christ to be faithful to the duties and teachings of religion, without thereby developing his intellect, and becoming a man of power: as in the case of Bunyan,—of Newton, the admired author of the Olney hymns,—of Richard Watson, the celebrated orator and theologian,—and thousands more, whose mental strength lay hidden even from themselves, until called out by the power of divine truth.

Behold, in these statements, young man, another argument in favor of a religious life! Embrace Christ as the best, perhaps the only means of bringing your intellect into a state of vigorous and healthy life,—as the guardian angel of your genius, if it be already manifested! Yield yourself up honestly and fully to the claims of God in Christ! Be a spiritual, intellectual Christian! Thus shall your mental and moral powers grow in harmonious proportion. Your heart shall be warm with emotions of love,—your understanding strong, mature, potential,—your conscience illuminated, quick, and pure,—your *will* upright, controlling, and inflexible. These things

being in you and abounding, you can hardly fail of success in the great battle of life, nor of rising to the honor of Christ's glorious kingdom in the life to come. Decide, therefore, oh young man! to listen attentively to the voice of Jesus Christ. Let him woo you to himself, through the sweet lines of the sacred poet, who thus beautifully sings: —

“ The wild dove hath her nest ;
 Earth, in her bosom, shields the timid hare ;
 Flowers sleep 'neath heaven's azure fane ; but where,
 Except ye come to me, shall ye find rest ?

“ Ye of the troubled breast,
 Weighed down with sorrow, and of life aweary,
 Whose paths extend through deserts waste and dreary,
 Come, then, to me, — I will impart relief !

“ In life's glad summer come ;
 Earth's lovely things, the beautiful, the gay,
 Are they not swept as autumn leaves away ?
 So pass your hopes and visions to the tomb.

“ Though by the world caressed,
 Though all its treasures glitter at your feet,
 And life's young years with rapture be replete,
 O, what are these to heaven — a heaven of rest ! ”

CHAPTER V.

ENERGY AN ELEMENT OF DISTINCTION.



T is impossible!" said one of Napoleon's staff officers, in reply to his great commander's description of a plan for some daring enterprise.

"IMPOSSIBLE!" cried the emperor, with indignation frowning on his brow,— "*Impossible* is the adjective of fools!"

This may be an apocryphal anecdote of the imperial conqueror; but it is at least characteristic. It displays that consciousness of power to overcome the mightiest obstacles, and to accomplish the most extravagant purposes, which was one of the chief elements of his early success. Its language is the strong expression of a mind

charged with an energy alike irresistible and unconquerable. And every young man, who hopes to stand triumphant at the goal of life, must possess a measure of this energy proportionate to the exigencies of his condition.

Energy is force of character — inward power. It imports such a concentration of the will upon the realization of an idea, as enables the individual to march unawed over the most gigantic barriers, or to crush every opposing force that stands in the way of his triumph. Energy knows of nothing but success: it will not hearken to voices of discouragement: it never yields its purpose; though it may perish beneath an avalanche of difficulty, yet it dies contending for its ideal.

LONGFELLOW's *EXCELSIOR* is a beautiful embodiment of the idea of Energy. Its hero is a young man seeking genuine excellence: proving himself superior to the love of ease, the blandishments of passion, and the sternest outward difficulties. The reader beholds him ascending the rugged steeps of the upper Alps, at the dangerous hour of twilight.

In his hand he bears a banner, whose strange device, "EXCELSIOR," is the visible expression of his noble purpose, to attain the height of human excellence. His brow is sad, his eyes are gleaming with the light of lofty thought, his step is firm and elastic; while his deep, earnest cry, "EXCELSIOR!" rings with startling effect among the surrounding crags and glaciers. Ease, in the form of an enchanting cottage, with its cheerful fire-side, invites him to relax his effort. Danger frowns upon him, from the brow of the awful avalanche, and from the "pine tree's withered branch." Caution, in the person of an aged Alpine peasant, shouts in his ear and bids him beware; while Love, in the form of a gentle maiden, with heaving breast and bewitching voice, woos him to her quiet bowers. But vain are the seductions of love, the voices of fear, or the aspects of danger. Regardless of each and of all, animated by his sublime aims, intent on success, he only grasps his mysterious banner more firmly, and bounds with swifter step along the dangerous steep. Through falling snows, along unseen paths, amidst intense

darkness, beside the most horrible chasms, he pursues his way, cheering his spirit, and startling the ear of night, with his battle-cry, " *Excelsior!* " until, on reaching the ~~sun~~summit, in the moment of accomplished purpose, his work done, his manly form chilled by the cold breath of the frost, he falls — yea, nobly falls — into the treacherous snow-drift, and

" There in the twilight, cold and gray,
Lifeless, but beautiful, he lay ;
And from the sky, serene and far,
A voice fell, like a falling star,
Excelsior !"

From the summit of human attainment on earth, he had gone to dwell in the blessed heaven of God. There his spirit, bathed in light, soars forever amidst the unspeakable glories of the Infinite.

This is a beautiful ideal of an energetic youth triumphing, even to the salvation of his immortal soul. May the dream of the poet be realized in the experience of the reader !

Energy is the soul of every great achievement ; while enervation emasculates the spirit, and dooms

the man to obscurity and ill success. Men of feeble action are accustomed to attribute their misfortunes to what is vulgarly termed "*ill luck*." They envy the men who climb the ladder of eminence, and call them "the favorite children of fortune,—lucky men and men of peculiar opportunity." This is a vain and foolish imagination. It is not ill fortune, so much as an enervated mind, that keeps thousands in inglorious obscurity. The blundering student, who stammers out an ill-learned lesson in his college class, and gains his diploma, at last, through indulgence rather than merit, owes his degraded position more to that voluntary mental imbecility which has ever shrunk from the labor of study, than to any absolute mental inferiority. His triumphant class-mate, who quits his college adorned with the proudest honors of his Alma Mater, is as much indebted to his persevering energy, as to his native genius, for his honorable victory. He might, had he been equally supine, have been equally degraded with his unhonored class-mate. But his energy saved him. So, in all the other walks of life, energy pro-

duces good fortune and success, while enervation breeds misfortune and "*bad luck*."

If any young man desires a confirmation of these ideas, let him carefully study the history of every man who has written his name on the walls of the Temple of Fame. Let him view such minds in their *progress* towards greatness. He will see them rising step by step, in the face of stubborn difficulties, which gave way before them only because their courage would not be daunted, nor their energy wearied. He will find no exception, in the history of mankind. Supine, powerless souls have always fainted before hostile circumstances, and sank beneath their opportunities; while men of power have wrestled with sublime vigor against all opposing men and things, and obtained success because they would not be defeated.

I might illustrate these views from the biography of any eminent man; but I select CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS as peculiarly adapted to my purpose. He was the son of an obscure wool-comber, in indigent circumstances, at Genoa. His early education was

limited. Bred to the profession of seamanship, and having a strong passion for geographical studies, his thoughts' mind conceived the idea that unknown empires existed west of the great Atlantic. He dwelt upon this thought, until it became fixed in his mind with singular firmness. It fired his soul with noble enthusiasm; it gave elevation to his spirit; it clothed his person with dignity, and inspired his demeanor with loftiness. Thus animated, he resolved to realize the truth of his great conception. Now came the test of his character. The idea itself was grand, and its conception bespoke the possession of a towering and glorious intellect. But, to make that conception a reality, to prove himself a true son of Genius, and not a mere romantic dreamer, required the exercise of such a measure of faith, self-reliance and enduring energy, as is seldom demanded of any man, even in the greatest of human enterprises.

But Columbus felt equal to his work, and he set about it with a purpose to do it. How sublime does he appear, in his conflict with poverty, ridicule, and ignorance! The announcement of his beloved idea

was greeted with torrents of derisive sarcasm, from prince and peasant, from learned savans and stupid dunces. Powerless and moneyless himself, he required the patronage of the powerful. Hence, he placed himself at the foot of the Portuguese throne, stated his views, and demanded ships to explore the ocean. Treated with fraud unworthy of a court, the intrepid man fled to Genoa, and importuned for aid in his native city. Unable to rouse the ambition of his countrymen, he repaired to Venice, and met with similar disappointment. From thence, he travelled to Spain, and plead his cause before the lordly Ferdinand and his great-minded queen, Isabella. There he was amused with promises of ships and men, for several years, during which time he perseveringly followed the court in its frequent journeyings. At last, wearied with their delays, but still resolute in his purpose, he prepared to quit Spain, and turned his footsteps towards the court of France. Arrested on his journey by the persuasions of an intelligent monk, he returned to Isabella's court, obtained the

long delayed means, and set sail on seas whose waters had never been cleaved by a vessel's prow.

With what high and confident expectation did the adventurous discoverer pass the boundaries of former navigation ! With what patient zeal did he overcome the superstition which made cowards of his mariners, and the ignorant envy which very nearly converted them into mutineers ! By the force of his own indomitable will alone, he soothed their fears, and held them to their duties, until he proudly anchored his vessels off the shores of the New World. And when the haughty flag of Spain flaunted in the breezes of the western hemisphere, as the sign of its subjugation to the crown of Isabella, it chiefly proclaimed the moral majesty of that unconquerable energy through which the noble-minded Columbus had singly defied the most formidable obstacles, and revealed a hidden world to the wondering eyes of mankind.

Are you, my reader, an aspirant after distinguished success ? Then, you must diligently cultivate an untiring, persisting, victorious energy, like that which

gave Columbus his renown. Is your lot lowly, and your sphere very limited? Are your difficulties apparently insurmountable? What then? Are you therefore to write yourself *a nothing*, and remain a cipher in society? Nay! You must rather bring an irresistible force of character to bear upon every work of life. Be supine in nothing! Never despair of success in any judicious enterprise! Resolve to accomplish whatever you undertake; and though you may not discover a new world, like Columbus; nor introduce mankind to the occult mysteries of nature, like Newton; nor attain the wealth of Rothschild, or Astor; yet, you may climb to the summit of your profession, attain to honorable distinction, and transmit to your posterity that most valuable of all bequests — *a good name*.

Yet you must beware of *rashness*. Successful energy is a Bucephalus, guided by the hand of an Alexander; rashness is as Mazeppa's fiery steed, unbridled and unrestrained, bearing its rider over hill and dale, to probable destruction. The former is power, guided by wisdom; the latter is power, goaded to act by

blind impulses. Many men, now pining in discouragement, have expended energy sufficient for the highest success. But they have failed of their reward, because they sought not for counsel at the lips of wisdom. Rash enterprises, impetuously begun, hurried them to ruin. In their business, they resembled an oriental warrior, named DERAR, who was once sent, with a small force, by ABU BEKER, the Moslem caliph, to hinder the progress of an advancing army, near the plains of Damascus. Derar found the foe to consist of masses of troops sufficient to overwhelm his little band ; but, instead of hovering round their flank, and harassing their march, he foolishly resolved on a regular attack. His voice thundered his battle-cry, and, followed by the flower of his chivalric soldiers, he rushed, with the fury of a whirlwind, upon the astonished enemy. So fiery was his onset, that the foe gave way, and their rich standard fell into the hands of the bold assailant. But his success was of brief duration ; numbers speedily prevailed, and Derar fell wounded into the hands of his enemies. Every Moslem in his devoted

little troop would have perished, but for the timely approach of the main body of the Arab army, which arrived in season to rescue them from destruction.

Thus has many a mercantile Dervar rushed madly upon an army of debts, which, after harassing him into a premature old age, have led him forth, a poor, dispirited creature, into the bondage of bankruptcy.

Beware, then, young man, of mistaking rashness for energy! They are so nearly allied that the mistake is easy. To guard you as much as possible, I will draw a simple sketch of a rash man, plunging, through excess of energy,— which is the same thing with rashness,— into business ruin.

I will call him EDGAR. In his youth he was apprenticed to a respectable tailor, became a superior workman, and, as soon as his apprenticeship expired, determined, without capital, and contrary to the advice of all his friends, to commence business on his own account. His reputation as a good apprentice procured him credit. He hired a store, purchased a small stock of goods, and rejoiced to see his name shining in gilt letters as a merchant tailor. Custom

came in freely; success seemed sure, notwithstanding the fears of his cautious friends. He redoubled his efforts, increased his stock, ornamented his store, and made quite a stir among business men. Such were his activity, punctuality and industry, that his business continued to advance; and in a year or two it exceeded that of many older firms in his vicinity. He now married, and for a time everything went on prosperously. But he was ambitious of having the finest store, and the largest stock, of any dealer in his line of business. Hence he constantly purchased beyond the necessities of his business. As a consequence, his notes matured before the means came in, and he began to be seen in the street, running from store to store, with the question, "Have you anything ever to-day?"

The frequency of these calls, and the difficulty he found in promptly repaying the sums thus generously loaned, awakened suspicion as to his safety, and his fellow-merchants soon met his question with an almost universal negative. This ought to have checked his passion for a large stock. But, eager as

ever for display, he persisted in buying beyond the immediate demands of his trade. As a thrifty merchant, too, he thought he must elevate his style of living. A better house, expensive furniture, a servant, the luxuries of the table, soon absorbed large portions of his profits. Still, his notes came to maturity with alarming rapidity. Driven to extremity, he resorted to that side-door to ruin, a broker's office. Exorbitant interest only increased his embarrassments. His temper grew sour; visions of ruin and bankruptcy floated before his eyes, and made him nervous and unhappy. He struggled, like a giant in bonds, for a few years; but, after growing prematurely gray in the conflict, he was forced to submit. His disgraced name appeared in the Gazette; and to-day Edgar sits on the bench, laboring for a scanty support, as an unknown journeyman tailor—a discouraged man!

It is easy for the reader to see that Edgar ruined himself by excess of energy; or, in other words, by rashness. Had he taken prudent advice at the beginning, and acquired a small capital in advance;

had he then wisely regulated his purchases by his actual resources, and restrained his personal expenses within the limit of his means, his strong force of character would have placed him among the first men of his class. But he was rash, and therefore he was ruined. His example is placed before the young merchant, that, as a beacon upon a sunken rock warns the mariner of danger, it may save him from a similar fate.

The energy of many men is *impulsive*. It is to-day a dashing, roaring torrent; to-morrow, it is a stagnant pool. An accidental circumstance will call out every power of their souls, and, for a season, they will excel themselves, and startle their friends. But they speedily spend their force, and lapse into stupid somnolency, until roused again by some bugle blast of excitement. Such minds accomplish but little. They lose more in their slumbers than they gain in their fitful hours of action. The calm, steady energy of the snail, slow as are its movements, is better calculated to produce results, than the spasmodic leaps of the hare. Hence, in the formation

of character, it is of vital importance to cultivate a steady, uniform, unyielding energy.

But how is this high qualification to be gained? Where is this precious possession to be obtained? I know of no means so certain and effectual as that of surrendering the soul to the claims of religion, the direct tendency of which is to call the whole force of the intellect and the affections into the highest and healthiest state of action. What is the grand central command of the Bible? "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy HEART, with all thy SOUL, and with all thy MIGHT!*" Here you see that energy of the loftiest character is demanded of the Christian. Nor is the command permitted to approach him as an impossible attainment; for, to every sincere creature who resolves to submit to the commandment, the promise of God says, "*My grace is sufficient for thee.*" Thus, divine power works with the human, and the man, in the might of his soul, stands forth as the servant of God.

Nor is it in his religious duties alone that the Christian is required and enabled to be *energetic*.

The Scriptures demand the application of a similar force of mind to all the duties of life. With authority they thunder in the ears of the disciple, "*WHATSOEVER thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might!*" Thus, whether his work be to fell a tree, to plough a field, to build a house, to labor in the pulpit, to plead at the bar, or to pray in the closet, the law is, "*DO IT WITH THY MIGHT!*"

There is a profound meaning in this command, rarely observed. It contains the philosophy of growth, and of greatness. It teaches that it is by the exercise of energy, in *little* things, we are to acquire power to triumph in great ones; that what we find to be done, we are to do — not to shrink from doing, because of its difficulty. Thus, by degrees, the soul is trained to put forth a force proportionate to its tasks; it grows in might, and conquers by habit. Everything it does is well done. It lives to subdue opposing forces. Instead of being the sport of circumstances, it seizes them as their master, and its career is one of perpetual triumph.

Would you have energy, young man? Seek it

at the cross of Christ! Let the spirit of Jesus clothe you with its divine beauty, and stimulate you by its mighty, life-giving force! Only be true to its holy promptings, and you will surely acquire the energy which grapples successfully with the obstacles of this terrestrial life, and climbs to the height of the celestial and eternal land.

CHAPTER VI.

INDUSTRY THE HIGHWAY TO SUCCESS.



HAVE somewhere read an old legend, which, however false in fact, contains a precious lesson. It states that, some centuries ago, a man, resident in Egypt, became a convert to the Christian faith. The spirit of the times favored asceticism; and he, being of a contemplative mind, conceived the unnatural idea that if he could retire far from human society, and spend his days in solitary contemplation, he should attain to the perfection of human happiness on earth. Filled with this thought, he bade adieu to the abodes of men, wandered far into the desert, selected a cave, near which flowed a living spring, for his home, and,

subsisting on the scanty crops of roots and herbs which sprang up spontaneously in the adjacent glens and valleys, began his life of meditation and prayer.

He had not spent many seasons in his hermitage before his solitary heart grew miserable beyond endurance. The long, weary hours of the day, and the dreary, interminable night, oppressed and crushed his listless soul. In the extremity of his wretchedness, he fell upon his face, and cried, "Father, call home thy child! Let me die! I am weary of life!"

Thus, stricken with grief, he fell asleep; and in his vision an angel stood before him, and spake, saying: "Cut down the palm-tree that grows beside yon spring, and of its fibres construct a rope!"

The vision passed away, and the hermit awoke with a resolution to fulfil his mission. But he had no axe, and, therefore, journeyed far to procure one. On his return, he felled the tree, and diligently labored until its fibres lay at his feet, formed into a coil of rope. Again the angel stood before him,

and said, "Dominic, you are now no longer weary of life, but you are happy. Know, then, that man was made for labor; and prayer also is his duty. Both are essential to his happiness. Go, therefore, into the world, with this rope girded upon thy loins. Let it be a memorial to thee of what God expects from man!"

This beautiful legend illustrates a truth which every young man should engrave on his heart—that *industry is essential to the enjoyment of life*. It is a law of the human constitution that mankind shall find their happiness and their development in action. And it were as easy to grasp the forked lightning, or to stay the fiery waves of the volcano, as to contravene this law. Nay! it cannot be; for He who said, "*In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground*," has established this inseparable connection between industry and enjoyment.

Industry implies regular and habitual devotion to a *useful* pursuit. It is covetous of *moments*, and guards them as a miser his grains of gold.

Moments, to the industrious man, are as flowers to bees; they furnish him with the opportunity of accomplishing his ends. He beholds in them the fractional parts of his life, and applies the maxim of the economist to their expenditure. His rule is: "Take care of the moments, and the years will take care of themselves." He is assiduous, not as a "hen over an addled egg," but to bring benefit out of his assiduity. He knows that it is possible to be always "busy about nothing," like *Æropus*, the Macedonian king, who wasted his life while busy in making lanterns! or, like Prince Bonbennin, in Goldsmith's "Citizen of the World," who was never more idle than when traversing his kingdom, searching after a pretty "white mouse with green eyes."

Behold yon graceful and sprightly "swallow zig-zagging over the clover-field, skimming the limpid lake, whisking round the steeple, or dancing gayly in the sky! Behold him in high spirits, shrieking out his ecstasy, as he has bolted a dragon-fly, or darted through the arrow slits of an old turret, or performed

some other feat of hirundine agility! And notice how he pays his morning visits — alighting elegantly on some house-top, and twittering politely, by turns, to the swallow on either side of him; and after five minutes' conversation, off and away, to call for his friend at the castle. And now he is gone upon his travels — gone to spend the winter at Rome or Naples, to visit Egypt or the Holy Land, or perform some more *recherché* pilgrimage to Spain or the coasts of Barbary. And when he comes home next April, sure enough he has been abroad: charming climate — highly delighted with the cicadas in Italy, and the bees on Hymettus — locusts in Africa rather scarce this season; but, upon the whole, much pleased with his trip, and returned in high health and spirits."

Such is the severe satire which the popular Robert Hamilton employs to chastise that large class of busy idlers which abounds in Europe, and which is fast multiplying in America. How degraded a thing is life as thus spent by a fashionable young man of the world, whose "*chief end*" seems to consist in

puffing cigars, and in conforming as near as may be to the example of the swallow in the above picture. No wonder that long before such young men attain meridian, they exclaim, with "CROAKER," in Goldsmith's "Good-natured Man," that "Life at the greatest and best is but a froward child, that must be humored and coaxed a little, till it falls asleep, and then all the care is over." Shame on such young men! Beside them, the twittering swallow is honorable and elevated. The bird was made for such a life, and thus fulfils its destiny; but that silly youth was made to be a MAN! — to commune with God, to labor in the holy charities and sublime duties of life.

To be industrious, then, a young man must have a *useful pursuit* and a worthy aim. He must follow that pursuit diligently. Rising early and economizing his moments, he must earnestly persist in his toil, adding little by little to his capital stock of ideas, influence or wealth. He must learn to glory in his labor, be it mechanical, agricultural, or professional. He must impress himself deeply with the idea that

a life of idleness is one of the direst of all curses. The doctrine that labor, even of the humblest character, is dishonorable, he must resolutely trample in the dust, as false and dangerous; and contend that an industrious, honest scavenger is really a more honorable man than the most fashionable dandy, who idles away his time on the pavements of Broadway, in ladies' drawing-rooms, in cafés, and in theatres. Thus, eschewing false ideas, and making every moment fruitful of some good to mind or body, to himself or to others, he cannot fail of a plenteous harvest of advantages as life advances. "*Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings. He shall not stand before mean men.*" "*The hand of the diligent shall rule.*"

I love to honor those men who are the *actual* of the *ideal* in the sacred texts just quoted — the pedestal of whose honorable and elevated position has been hewed out of the reluctant granite by their own labor-loving hands. What is a haughty duke or earl, with his lofty ancestry running back through a thousand years, when compared with an industrious

son of labor, whose patent of nobility is found in his own noble struggles with early poverty and obscurity? Let the heart of the young man answer this question!

Permit me to lead you, for a moment, my reader, into yonder printing-office. Among the printers are two young men who are noted for the unwearied assiduity with which they ply their daily tasks. Always in the office at the appointed hour, ever at their posts, toiling with uncomplaining steadiness, never yielding to the lassitude which craves a respite before its work is finished, they have secured the respect of their employers, the confidence of their friends, and are slowly improving their own condition. Concerning these young men, suppose I predict that they will one day become widely known and immensely rich. What do you reply?

You pronounce my prediction an extravagance, and me a visionary man! Be it so. Yet under the guise of this fancy I have exhibited only a simple fact. The two young men represent Messrs. **JAMES AND JOHN HARPER**, who, some thirty years ago, were

poor journeymen printers; but who, to-day, are owners of one of the most princely publishing establishments in the world. Their names are household words in all civilized communities. And of Mr. James Harper it may be said, that, if not, like the Whittington of our boyish reveries, thrice Lord Mayor of London, he has been once Mayor of the chief city in the great Empire State. But his proudest distinction is, that he and his brothers have reared their magnificent house on the foundations of INTEGRITY, ECONOMY, AND INDUSTRY !

The success of industrious effort finds a further illustration in the case of a little boy named Armstrong, who, a few years ago, entered a Boston printing-office, and labored diligently, as the youngest apprentice, at the lowest tasks of the establishment. Sedulously attending to his duties as they increased in responsibility, he kept on his steady way, until, honorably concluding his apprenticeship, he began business for himself at the corner of Flag-alley, in State-street. Unwearied in his devotion to his profession, his custom and profits increased. Wealth

poured in apace upon him. Honors crowned his brow; and he took his seat, first in the General Court, then in the honorable chair of the Boston Mayoralty, and at length in that of the Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts. He spent the closing years of his life in a pleasant and stately mansion, an affluent, honorable, and independent man—a noble example of what may be accomplished by the aids of industry.*

The *amount* of profitable labor that a man can healthfully accomplish during a life of threescore years can hardly be overrated. The examples of preëminently industrious men startle ordinary minds, and they surmise that some friendly hand drew their portraits, and was too lavish in the coloring. But facts are demonstrative that wonders can be accomplished by industry, in every department of human life.

WILLIAM COBBETT, whom Ebenezer Elliot designated as England's

* See notice of Lieut. Gov. Armstrong, by Mr. Buckingham, in the *Boston Courier*.

"Mightiest peasant born,"

is an illustration. He was of low birth, and was reared in poverty. While yet a young man, he enlisted into the British army. After serving eight years, he was discharged, and shortly after commenced his political career. From that time to his death, embracing a period of forty-three years,—during which he travelled extensively, suffered imprisonments for political offences, devoted much time to agricultural pursuits, labored incessantly as a political agitator, and finally became a member of the British Parliament,—he produced and published no less than *fifty* books of various sizes, and on a variety of topics, besides editing *ninety* volumes of his political papers! the effect of which on the destinies of England justifies the strong lines of the lamented Corn-law Rhymer, who thus addresses his memory:

"Dead oak, thou livest! Thy smitten hands,
The thunder of thy brow,
Speak with strange tongues in many lands,
And tyrants hear thee now!"

Now, it is not the character of Cobbett that I

commend to your imitation, but his industry. With all his power, energy and talent, notwithstanding his pen made the aristocracy of England tremble before its terrible strokes, he was, in my opinion, "a bold. bad man," actuated by passion, hate and prejudice, rather than by high and holy principles. Still, his laborious diligence is worthy of all commendation, and it is to this, rather than to natural talent, that he himself ascribes his superiority over the millions above whose head he rose to distinction. A diligent husbandry of his time was the talisman by which he achieved his prodigious labors; and this is within the power of every young man, who may also, in his turn, astonish and shame the drones among mankind by the huge measure of his labors, if he will employ his time after the example of William Cobbett.*

Martin Luther, Richard Baxter, John Wesley, Adam Clarke, Richard Watson, Napoleon Bonaparte, Elihu Burritt, and a host beside, might be quoted as demonstrations of what may be done by an industri-

* For a very fair critique on the life and labors of Cobbett, see Stanton's "Sketches of Reforms and Reformers," page 155.

ous employment of moments during a life-time. But what does it avail to multiply examples? Let the young man resolve to become an example himself. Determine to make the most of your opportunities, my young friend; and henceforth act on the principle that moments are grains of gold, by the careful gathering of which you are to become rich in knowledge, in experience, in honor, and in happiness.

It is often objected, that unceasing and assiduous devotion to a round of duties is unfavorable to health. The pale face and emaciated form of the student, the feeble frame of the trembling dyspeptic, and the dying aspect of the flushed consumptive, are pointed out as illustrations of the disastrous influence of toil on the enjoyment and duration of life, and as arguments in favor of self-indulgence and indolent relaxation.

Away with all such pleas and arguments, my young friend! They are the voices of sloth. True, a man may overtax his powers, and injure his health, by excessive toil, as was, no doubt, the case with the

unfortunate HENRY KIRKE WHITE. He was un-
wisely ambitious, and attempted tasks with a consti-
tutionally feeble body, which, with the most robust
health, he could scarcely have performed. Such a
fact teaches that we must proportion our labors to
our capacities, — not that we are to sink into supine
indulgence, lest we should be sick. Nay, it is not
unrelaxing industry, systematically pursued, that
pales the face and shortens life. The fact is, that the
most industrious men are among the longest livers ;
and except where hereditary diseases enfeeble them,
are usually healthy. Indeed, industry is favorable
to health. There is great meaning in the remark
of an eastern missionary who was laboring inces-
santly on the translation of the Scriptures into the
Hindostan tongue. His friends expostulated with
him, and begged him to relax. "Nay," said he ;
"the man who would live in India must have plenty
of work. If not, he will yield to the enervating in-
fluence of the climate, and lounge away his days
upon the sofa, and consequently be tossing all night
on his sleepless couch, for want of the requisite

fatigue. Then comes dejection of spirits, and prostration of the whole man."

The missionary was right. Indolence destroys more than industry; and many a drone who has perished prematurely, had his friends been equally honest with Sir Horace Vere, would have had it said of him, as that nobleman said of his brother, when the Marquis of Spinola asked, "Pray, Sir Horace, of what did your brother die?"

"He died of having nothing to do!" was the bluff knight's reply.

When I am told, of a sickly student, that he is "studying himself to death," or of a feeble young mechanic, or clerk, that his hard work is destroying him, I study his countenance, and there, too often, read the real, melancholy truth in his dull, averted, sunken eye, discolored skin, pimpled forehead, and timid manner. These signs proclaim that the young man is in some way violating the laws of his physical nature. He is *secretly* destroying himself! By sinning against his own body, he is preparing himself for the insane asylum, or for an early grave.

Yet, say his unconscious and admiring friends, " He is falling a victim to his own diligence ! " Most lame and impotent conclusion ! He is sapping the source of life with his own guilty hands, and ere long will be a mind in ruins or a heap of dust. Young man, beware of his example ! "Keep thyself pure ;" observe the laws of your physical nature, and the most unrelaxing industry will never rob you of a moment's health, nor in the smallest measure shorten the thread of your life ; for industry and health are companions, and long life is the heritage of diligence.

Behold a cottage at the foot of yonder mountain ! On its broken gate sits a lifeless-looking man, with an unstrung bow lying across his knees, and a quiver of arrows strung across his shoulders. A deer, with its delicate young fawn, comes lightly tripping from among the foliage which adorns the mountain slope. Lifting up his heavy eyes, the hunter perceives his prey, and, for a moment, kindles into something like an earnest man. Leaping from the gate, he strains his bow, fixes an arrow on its string, and gliding

from tree to bush and from bush to tree, approaches the unwatchful deer; then drawing his bow, he lodges an arrow in the heart of the fawn. Seating himself beside it, he triumphs a while in his success; and then, seeking the shadow of an adjacent tree, slumbers away the day, and permits the burning sun to spoil his vension!

Such is the picture of an idle man, as sketched by Solomon, in these words: "*The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting.*" I have filled up his slender outline, that the young man may study it to better advantage; for in this instance, at least, the poetic sentiment is literally true, that the monstrous spectacle of vice is sufficient to excite disgust. I greatly misjudge the reader, if he does not heartily despise the idle hunter in the above etching: if he will transfer his scorn to the vice the hunter personates, my end will be accomplished.

To be above the necessity of labor,—to spend life in doing nothing,—is the fancied paradise of many youthful minds. Yielding to these illusive dreams, they cultivate a hatred for labor; they view the

necessity which binds them to the counting-room or the workshop as the galley-slave regards his chain. They envy every gay son of pleasure whose empty laugh is heard ringing through the street. Hence their labor is irksome — their temper sour and repulsive. Their manners become insulting and vexatious to their employers; their incessant complainings annoy their parents, and misery spreads throughout the entire circle of their influence. Thousands of parental hearts are aching at this moment, and thousands of employers are unhappy with their apprentices, solely from this foolish, guilty aspiration after *nothing to do* which haunts the imaginations of so many young men.

But why do young men pant after an idle life? It is because they are wilfully ignorant of the important practical truth, that **THE CREATOR COULD HARDLY INFILCT A GREATER CURSE UPON A YOUNG MAN THAN TO DOOM HIM TO A LIFE OF IDLENESS!** It would destroy him, soul and body. What is a mind when controlled by idleness? Let the admired Tennyson reply. Personating an idle mind, he says:

“A spot of dull stagnation, without light
Or power of movement, seemed my soul,
Mid onward sloping motions of the infinite,
Making for one sure goal.

“A still salt pool, locked in with bars of sand ;
Left on the shore ; that hears all night
The plunging seas draw backward from the land
Their moon-led waters white.

“A star that with the choral starry dance
Joined not, but stood, and standing saw
The hollow orb of moving circumstance
Rolled round by one fixed law.”

If you are ambitious to be “a spot of dull stagnation,” “a still salt pool,” or a motionless star, be idle, and you shall assuredly reach the limit of your ambition. But oh, it is a costly price to pay for idleness ! Nor is the intellect the only sufferer. The heart, the moral character, and even the physical man, share in the dreadful curse. The heart of an idle man is an open common, inviting the presence of every odious vice, which enters in, and makes it utterly loathsome. Instead of waiting to be tempted, it “positively tempts the devil ;” and while “the busy man is troubled with but one devil,

the idle man is visited by a thousand." Idleness first draws its victim from honorable labors, and then whips him into theatres, cafés, gambling saloons, and darker dens of infamy. It denudes him of all moral beauty and excellency, strips him of self-respect, plunges him into ruin, disease and degradation ; having bound him hand and foot, it plunges his body into an unhonored grave, and consigns his soul to "*everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*" Well hath Holy Writ described the ruin of the indolent man ! He began by hating labor, and crying, "*Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep.*" The first visible effect of his sloth was seen in his field and vineyard, "*which was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down.*" Unalarmed by this growing desolation, the sluggard maintained his hatred of toil, until, as the stroke of war falls upon an unsuspecting hamlet, or a traveller, long on the way, arrives at last, so

poverty and want overwhelmed him in irretrievable destruction.

Perhaps my reader replies to this deeply shaded scene, that such ruin is an extreme case, and not likely to occur to young men generally. True, it is extreme; but it is equally true that vast numbers of young men annually sink thus from positions of high promise into utter abandonment and destruction. But admit that the idle youth so trims between sloth and industry as to avoid utter ruin,—what then? He lives a useless, insignificant life. His place in society is aptly illustrated by certain books in a Boston library, which are lettered "Succedaneum" on their backs. "Succedaneum!" exclaims the visitor; "what sort of a book is that?" Down it comes; when lo! a wooden block, shaped just like a book, is in his hands. Then he understands the meaning of the occult title to be, "In the place of another;" and that the wooden book is used to fill vacant places, and to keep genuine volumes from falling into confusion. Such is an idler in society. A man in form, but a block in fact. Liv-

ing for no high end, giving out no instruction — a dumb, despised “Succedaneum” among mankind.

Nor is this all. Behold such a man drawing nigh to the end of his existence! His pampered and slothful body is tossing upon an uneasy bed. His pale face betokens his approach to the hour of final conflict. His life now passes in sad review before his closing eyes! How like a desert waste it looks! Vainly he searches for some solitary sign that he has not lived in vain. Nought but the dead level of a sandy plain appears. Groaning with anguish, he cries out:

“My life has been as the passage of a ship over the ocean! — as the journey of a pilgrim across a desert! Not a token of my industry, not a trace of my footsteps! No! no more than if my mother had not borne me!”

And with this melancholy utterance, he trembles, shudders, and expires!

And now, young man, having said enough to convince you that your highest interests require of you a life of cheerful labor, I demand your solemn

resolve to become a true son of industry. I know all the witcheries of those things which incline you to idleness; the strength of the tendency to sloth in your own breast, and the many failures at self-conquest which are recorded in your past history. But I also know, that if you will seek the aids of *religion*, they will prove sufficient for your utmost needs. Religion will teach you that industry is a SOLEMN DUTY you owe to God, whose command is, Be “DILIGENT IN BUSINESS!” Who says of every disciple of his Son, “*Let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.*” Religion will shed lustre upon your meanest toils, by converting them into so many acts of service to Almighty God. It will cheer your labors with beams of beauty and glory, from those realms of eternal rest where employment will be unaccompanied by toil. It will fill your soul with contentment and joy, submission and hope; and arm you with strength to “*come off more than conqueror*” over all foes to industry and purity, “*through Christ who loved you, and gave himself for you.*” The

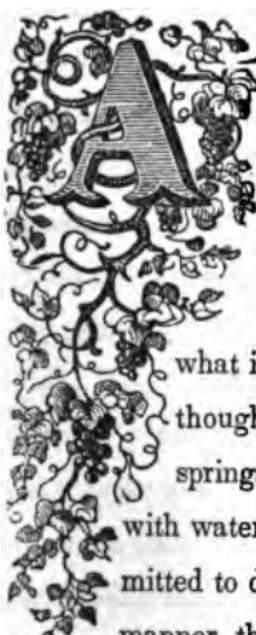
burdens of life thus lightened of their weight, you shall endure them cheerfully, so that, whenever you fall in the embrace of death, it may be said of you, in the words of Aldich :

“ His sufferings ended with the day,
Yet lived he at its close ;
And breathed the long, long night away
In statue-like repose.

‘ But when the sun, in all his state,
Illumed the eastern skies,
He passed through glory’s morning gate,
And walked in Paradise.”

CHAPTER VII.

ECONOMY AND TACT.



S the acquisition of knowledge depends more upon what a man *remembers* than upon the quantity of his reading, so the acquisition of property depends more upon what is *saved* than upon what is *earned*. The largest reservoirs, though fed by abundant and living springs, will fail to supply their owners with water, if secret leaking-places are permitted to drain off their contents. In like manner, though by his skill and energy a man may convert his business into a flowing Pactolus, ever depositing its golden sands in his coffers, yet, through the numerous wastes of unfrugal habits, he may live embarrassed and die poor. Economy is

the guardian of property — the good genius whose presence guides the footsteps of every prosperous and successful man.

Economy is a trite and forbidding theme. The young man will feel tempted to pass it by, and proceed to the next chapter. But I beseech him to read on, since his social advancement depends, in a good degree, upon his frugality. *He had better be doomed, like the sons of ancient Jacob in Egypt, to make bricks without straw, than to enter the scenes of active life without economy for a companion. Study well, therefore, young man, the following picture :

RALPH MONTCALM is a merchant's clerk, enjoying a fair salary. His age is about twenty-two; his appearance is genteel, without foppishness; his manners are gentlemanly and polite, without affectation. By strict fidelity to the duties of his station, he has gained a high reputation for industry, energy, and integrity. He is also understood to be worth a few hundred dollars, which he has invested with great caution and judgment, where it will yield him a safe

and profitable return. The general impression concerning him, among the merchants in his vicinity, is, that he will one day be a man of some importance in society. A shrewd business man remarked, one day, to his employer : " Your clerk has the elements of a successful merchant."

" Yes, sir ; Ralph is destined to wield considerable influence, 'on change,' one of these days ; and being very economical in his habits, he can hardly fail of becoming a rich man."

Such was the reply of Ralph's master. It showed that the clerk was acting on those principles which, in the estimation of experienced men, insure success. Yet Ralph's conduct found no sympathy from the fashionable disciples of dandyism, who filled situations similar to his own, as will be seen by the following conversations.

Ralph was walking home, one evening, from his counting-room, when a fellow-clerk, who was quite an exquisite in his own estimation, overtook him. He was puffing a cigar after the most approved fash-

ion. Stepping up to Ralph, he touched him on the arm and said :

“Good-evening, Mr. Montcalm !”

“Good-evening, sir !” replied Ralph to this salutation ; a few common-places passed between them, and then the dandy, taking out his case of Havanas, said :

“Will you take a cigar with me, Mr. Montcalm ?”

“I thank you, sir, but I never smoke !” replied Ralph, with an emphasis which left no room for persuasion.

“Never smoke !” exclaimed the astonished dandy, replacing the cigar-case in his pocket. “What on earth can induce you to deny yourself so delicious a luxury ?”

“It is a luxury that costs too much, sir, for me to indulge in it. I really cannot afford it.”

“O, I see,” retorted the smoker, as he puffed forth an enormous column of smoke from his steaming mouth ; “you belong to the race of misers, and are set on saving your money, instead of enjoying life as it passes. For my part, I despise all such

stinginess, and calculate to enjoy all the pleasure money will buy."

Ralph took no notice of his companion's impolite insinuation, but in a kindly tone answered: "The use of tobacco, in every form, is positively injurious to health and intellect; as a habit, it is filthy, vulgar, and disgusting, to all but those who use it. Besides this, it makes a heavy and constant drain on the purse. I confess, I am too stingy to pay so high a price for a luxury which would shorten my life, fill me with disease, and render me disgusting to others. I would rather save my money for high and noble uses."

This sensible reply was too much for the smoker to endure. He therefore gruffly replied: "You talk more like a Puritan than a gentleman;" and hurried forward, leaving Ralph to his reflections, which were certainly more agreeable than the company of such an empty-brained exquisite.

On another occasion, he was thrown into the society of another of these contemptible children of

fashion, who, in the course of conversation, inquired, “Where do you board, Mr. Montcalm ?”

“At Mrs. Brown’s, in G—— Street.”

“Indeed ! How can you think of boarding in such an unfashionable street ?”

“It is my fashion to seek respectability, comfort, cleanliness and purity, in my home ; and all these I have at Mrs. Brown’s.”

“That may be ; but G—— Street is such an unfashionable street ! — and Mrs. Brown is a poor woman.”

“Very true, but still I find genuine comfort, abundant food, and amiable society, at her house ; and at a price which I can well afford to pay. What, then, should I gain by going up town to one of your fashionable houses ? What do you pay, where you board ?”

“I pay rather high, in proportion to my salary, to be sure. My board costs me six dollars a week. But then everything is in style ; the boarders are all *fashionable* young men, and I get into some of the highest society in the city through their influence,

besides gaining the reputation of being fashionable myself."

"But how do you manage to meet all your expenses? Your salary is only five hundred dollars per annum. You pay over three hundred dollars for board. Your other expenses are in proportion. I do not see how you can ever expect to rise above your clerkship, or even to marry, without saving something for capital; and saving, according to your statements, is out of the question."

"Saving! Don't talk of saving, Mr. Montcalm! I should be very happy to be out of debt. As to business or marriage, I dare not think of either, unless some good-natured merchant should be foolish enough to make me his partner."

"You may well say foolish; for, who but a 'good-natured fool' would dream of taking you, or any other slave of fashionable life, into partnership? For myself, I intend both to marry and to enter into business, at a proper time; hence, I cannot afford to be a fashionable young man. It costs too much. I prefer the real comfort of a respectable home, and the

gains of frugality, to the ruinous reputation of being 'a man of fashion.' I wish you good-morning, sir."

"Good-morning, Mr. Montcalm," replied the fashionable young gentleman; and they parted, the former to mount the path of honor, the latter to flutter a while, like a stupid moth, around the lamp of fashion, to burn his wings, and then to crawl in obscurity to an unhonored grave.

The reader must view Ralph Montcalm in yet another scene. It is laid in the counting-room of a merchant, with whom Ralph had been transacting some business in his employer's behalf. Just before he left, a gentleman entered on an errand of benevolence. A poor family, in very destitute circumstances, needed aid to keep them from starvation. So stated the visiter, and then he asked :

"Gentlemen, what will you give?"

"Too poor to give!" one of the clerks abruptly replied. He was well known for his love of driving *a la tandem* along the city avenues.

"It costs me so much to live, I can't give any-

thing!" said another, whose very costly and fashionable attire placed his statement above suspicion.

"Have n't a dollar to spare!" bluntly responded a third, who was remarkable for being almost buried under a load of debts.

"Put me down two dollars," said Ralph, in a half whisper, to the collector, as he quietly handed him that amount.

"How is it that you can afford to give to every one that asks? Your salary is no larger than ours, and yet we can hardly pay our bills. Giving, with us, is out of the question," said the chief clerk to Ralph.

Ralph smiled, and replied: "Gentlemen, the difficulty is easily solved. You live high; I live moderately. You are extravagant; I economize. You wear the costliest clothing, and follow every changing fashion; I dress respectably, and avoid extremes. You spend large sums per annum on cigars, wines, riding, theatres, operas, balls and costly suppers; I deny myself these indulgences, partly because of their cost, and partly because of their immoral tendencies. My pleasures are intellectual; they afford

me higher and purer enjoyment than yours, and cost much less. Hence, while you are poor, I have money invested, and something to spare to alleviate the sorrows of others. Good-morning, gentlemen."

Such is the example of economy which I desire to urge upon you, young man, for your imitation. Not a miserly meanness, which denies itself the common comforts of life, and shuts itself within walls of triple steel against the appeals of benevolence ; but such a manly, generous habit of expending your resources as will tend to improve your condition, without debasing your nature,—to make you a man of property, without sinking you to the sordid level of a miser. The principles, which make such admirable economists as young Ralph Montcalm, are :

1. **ALWAYS LET YOUR EXPENDITURE BE LESS THAN YOUR INCOME.** This is the grand element of success in acquiring property. To carry it out, requires resolution, self-denial, self-reliance. But it must be done, or you must be a poor man all through life. If for example, your income is *six* dollars a week, you

must live on *five*, or *four*, if you can with decency. But, further :

2. LITTLE EXPENSES MUST BE CAREFULLY GUARDED AGAINST. I once saw a full-grown caterpillar borne along the garden path by an army of tiny ants, which had made him their captive ; at another time, I saw an insect, somewhat resembling a dragon-fly, bearing off a caterpillar by his own unaided strength. In both cases, the victim perished ; and it made little difference whether he was in the hands of a single dragon-fly, or of an army of ants. Thus, many little expenses are as fatal to a young man's prosperity as a great speculation which ruins at a single blow. The former will as surely bear him to the grave of poverty as the latter. Hence, the pence so foolishly spent on cigars, confectionary, fruit, ice-creams, soda, water, &c., must be retained in the purse of the young man who intends to take rank in respectable society. If they escape, they will, in spite of all his resistance, be like the ant-army, and will bear him to a pauper's grave. *Deny thyself*, in little as in great things, is a necessary condition of prosperity.

3. AVOID THE HABIT OF GETTING INTO DEBT. Attention to the above maxims will make the observance of this one easy. Still, there is, to some minds, such a fascination in the act of buying on credit, that they will do it even when they have cash in their pockets. You must avoid this practice! Pay for what you purchase, at least until you begin business; and then buy very cautiously, and you will rarely buy what you do not need. To be in debt, is to be enslaved; it is a prolific source of care; an occasion of temptation to extravagance; it often leads to falsehood, dishonesty, gambling, destruction. Debt destroys more than the cholera. Therefore, young man, avoid debt!

4. AVOID LITTLENESS. You saw Ralph Montcalm ready to give to the poor. You must do the same, if not from pure benevolence of feeling, at least out of regard for yourself. Strict economy may lapse into sordid covetousness, and make the frugal man contemptibly mean. I have been told of a wealthy farmer, a professor of religion, who invited a student, just licensed to preach, to stay at his house during a

series of religious meetings he was conducting in the neighborhood. When the young preacher was about to leave, the farmer accompanied him to the gate, expressing great pleasure for his visit and labors. Just before they parted, he said, "Mr. ——, I should like to make you a small present."

"I thank you, sir!" said the young student, bowing acquiescence to the welcome suggestion.

The farmer then took a twenty-five cent coin from his pocket, and said: "This is the smallest change I have. If you will give me twelve and a half cents in change, you may keep the rest!"

"I have no silver about me," replied the student, as he leaped on to his horse, scarcely able to conceal the combined emotions of indignation and merriment which struggled within him for expression.

If this fact had not been related in my hearing by the aforesaid student, I could hardly have believed that any man could have acted with such contemptible littleness as that farmer; yet such is the meanness of spirit which will grow upon the man whose economy is not joined to some form of benevolent

action. Therefore, I repeat the injunction,— avoid littleness, by carefully cultivating a generous philanthropic spirit, amidst all your plans of frugality.

There is another element of success which is worthy of a few thoughts. I mean *tact*, or versatility—a power of self-adaptation to every new opening of Providence. A man of tact immediately fills a new position with naturalness, and, however he himself may feel its embarrassments, he forces the impression upon others, that he is just the man for the place. On the other hand, without tact, a man is impracticable. Change his sphere, and he acts stiffly, awkwardly; he is like a stiff-jointed country recruit at his first drill; so uncouth are his movements, that lookers-on exclaim, “He will never do!” Hence, his friends lose their interest in his advancement. They fear to advance him, lest his clownishness should mortify their pride. He is left to pine in the obscurity of a lowly position.

But *tact* is the gift of nature! Yes! to some extent 't is so. Versatility is easier to some than to others. That is, it requires less effort in some than

in others, to adapt themselves to new relations to society. But even the versatility of the proudest sons of genius is the offspring of self-culture. The man who shines in an exalted position, who appears in it at such perfect ease that one might infer he was born to fill it, has gained the confidence which inspires him with ease by previous self-cultivation. A man who is true to himself is always in advance of his actual position; hence, when called to higher posts, he moves into them and fills them with propriety and dignity. This is *tact*. And the mental training which creates tact is within the reach of every young man.

But what has religion to do with these elements of success in life? It might as properly be asked, what has an anchor to do with the safety of a ship? For, as the latter is held at a secure distance from the shore, notwithstanding the driving gale, so is a young man bound to the practice of economy and the cultivation of tact by the authoritative claims of religion. Pride, sensuality, and custom, are like strong winds beating life's young voyager upon the

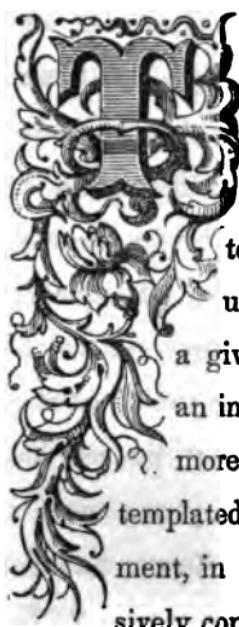
rocks of prodigality, or the quicksands of extravagance. Religion anchors him fast, by her strong principles. She exacts diligence, industry, honesty, by her precepts; she pictures the desolation of the spendthrift by her inimitable drawing of the Prodigal Son; she checks waste by teaching the doctrine of accountability to God for all we possess; thundering in every ear her call of "*Give an account of thy stewardship!*" Concerning the duty of fitting one's self to fill his station with honor, the precept of Paul to Timothy is apposite: "*Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed;*" and again, "*Give thyself wholly*" to the duties of thy vocation, "*that thy profiting may appear to all.*" This exhortation, self-applied by every young man, would constitute him, in a greater or less degree, a man of tact.

Thus does religion in the soul give vigor and fruitfulness to every element of prosperity in human character. Viewed in all its aspects, it justifies the beautiful figure of the good man in the song of the

royal psalmist : “*He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season : his leaf also shall not wither ; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.*”

CHAPTER VIII.

HARMONY OF CHARACTER.



HE ABBE MENNAIS has made this beautiful remark: that "from the sun, whence pour inexhaustible floods of light and life, down to the spring that drop by drop exudes from the rock, all is ordered for a given end, to which all contribute in an infinite variety of ways, that are the more admired the more they are contemplated. There is not an action, a movement, in the universe, that does not successively contribute to the growth of a tuft of moss."

In this harmony of nature—a harmony so complete and so necessary, that the failure of any one operation in the universe would neutralize the action of all the rest, and denude the earth of its beauty

and adornment,—we may learn a profitable lesson in relation to the influence of character upon success. In the preceding chapters, I have presented various elements of character in their relation to a prosperous life. They have been treated separately; and, lest the reader should fall into the blunder of supposing that any one of them can *singly* lead to success, I wish to say with emphasis, that as in the operations of nature, so in the conflicts of life, the effect of great success is produced by the *harmonious combination* of each and every valuable quality. The absence of one qualification may hinder the productiveness of all the rest; the excess of another may undo all that the proper action of the rest had accomplished. For example, let a young man be industrious, versatile, energetic, intelligent, and yet lack integrity, what becomes of his prosperity? He *may* acquire wealth by dishonest means, but he must live without the confidence of good men, and die "*as the fool dieth.*" Or, suppose him to have integrity, intelligence, industry, economy, and to be defective in energy; he will sink, in spite of all his high qual-

ifications, beneath the obstacles which lie in every man's path to eminence. Or, again, let him have an excess of energy, he will be rash and fall into irretrievable ruin ; let him be excessively frugal, and he will become a miser ; let him be over versatile he will be the "rolling stone which gathers no moss ;" an excessive attachment to letters will convert him into a theorist or a book-worm. Thus, it is apparent, that, to insure success, a young man must diligently attain and prudently cultivate all those particular excellences, which, when possessed in combination, make a failure next to impossible.

What reader of Holy Scripture has not felt a most tender regard for that interesting youth, who, in all the eagerness of self-confidence, stood complacently before the great Teacher and asked :

"Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life ? "

With what elation of soul did that young self-deceiver listen to the reply of the great heart-searcher : *"If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments ! "*

Exulting in his fancied triumph, the young man replied : “*All these have I kept from my youth up ! What lack I yet ?*”

By one stroke — a stroke severely kind — the Redeemer prostrated all his hopes : “**YET LACKEST THOU ONE THING !**” And then he gave him a practical test, which at once unfolded his true state to his startled mind, and convinced him that, however externally spotless he might be, his heart was supremely selfish. He lacked that self-devotion to the glory of God which is the essence of all true religion — a lack that neutralized all his excellences, and was fatal to his confidence in the Divine favor.

Young man, you may, in like manner, fail of true greatness through one fatal deficiency, and be ranked with the men so fitly described by the great English bard : —

“ Men

Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
Their virtues else (be they as pure as grace,
As infinite as man may undergo)
Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault.”

13*

LORD BYRON's history furnishes a most painful example of the ruin resulting from the want of symmetry in character. To use the splendid diction of MACAULAY, "He was born to all men covet and admire. But in every one of those eminent advantages which he possessed over others there was mingled something of misery and debasement. He was sprung from a house, ancient indeed, and noble, but degraded and impoverished by a series of crimes and follies. The young peer had great intellectual powers; yet there was an unsound part in his mind. He had naturally a generous and tender heart; but his temper was wayward and irritable. He had a head which statuaries loved to copy, and a foot the deformity of which the beggars in the street mimicked. He was distinguished by the strength and by the weakness of his intellect; affectionate, yet perverse,—a poor lord, and a handsome cripple."

What was the result of these opposite combinations?—of this lack of moral symmetry? The first noticeable efforts of his muse, being directed by his perverse temper, brought him a harvest of contempt

and hatred. Stung to the quick, he exerted his noble genius, and produced a composition which raised him to the pinnacle of fame; and "all this world, and all the glory of it, were at once offered to him." Like a spoiled child, he now yielded to the violence of his passions, and the bitterness of his temper. For this, society cast him out of its pale. He fled to Italy; and there, by turns, cultivated his genius and gratified his passions. He lost his health, his hair became gray, his food ceased to nourish him. The Grecian struggle for independence roused for a time his nobler sentiments. He dragged his diseased body to Missolonghi; and there, at the age of thirty-six, this "most celebrated Englishman of the nineteenth century closed his brilliant and miserable career."

Who will deny that Lord Byron's life was a splendid failure? Why was it so? Not for lack of high qualities of mind, but through excess of low and degraded passions. Had this unhappy man subdued his evil qualities, and sedulously cultivated what was high and noble in his nature, his name

would have passed down to posterity as a model of all excellency and beauty. Neglecting this, he stands among the images of the past like some grim ghost on the great highway of life, scaring the advancing traveller from the ways of self-neglect and self-indulgence

To resist temptations, to be prepared for all emergencies, to rise to real eminence, to answer life's great end, you must avoid the example before you. You must cultivate all the conditions of success, and especially those in which you find yourself most deficient. See to it that there are neither excesses nor defects in your character, but a harmonious blending, a delightful symmetry, formed of fitting proportions of every high quality.

How shall this symmetry of character be attained? By what means shall the young man repress his low and debasing qualities, develop what is noble and beautiful in human nature, and maintain a due proportion of each element of social superiority? This is a great question. I will attempt its solution.

Figure to your mind a perfect circle; — observe

that its perfection depends upon the equidistance of every part of its line from the point in its centre. The least deviation would destroy its perfectibility. Harmony of character is, in like manner, produced by the action of some great central principle upon the conduct—a principle whose comprehensive grasp reaches to every act and feeling, regulating, stimulating, repressing, or guiding, as circumstances may require. Such a principle, standing like the central point in the circle, and wielding absolute authority over the soul, is the only sure means of producing that harmony of character so essential to success.

The stern heroism of REGULUS, the Roman general, may serve to illustrate the influence of such a principle. This brave soldier, after being defeated, and kept in captivity for several years, was sent by the Carthaginians with an embassy to Rome, to solicit a cessation of arms and an exchange of prisoners. To secure his influence in their favor, they made him swear that, if the desired end was not attained; he would return to Carthage. The Roman took the oath, and departed.

Touched with the misfortunes of their general, the Roman senate was disposed to treat for peace, and retain the heroic Régulus. But he, knowing the weakness and exhaustion of Carthage, boldly advised the continuance of the war. Upon this, the senate rejected the overtures of the ambassadors; and, knowing the fate which awaited their general, entreated him to remain at Rome. His wife, his children, his friends, with tears and embraces, besought him not to rush on certain destruction. He was inexorable. He had sworn to return, and no considerations could change his iron purpose to keep his oath. He did return, and his ungenerous foes, to their eternal infamy, put him to death in the most cruel and malignant manner.

What was it that made Regulus proof against the tears of his friends, the love of his wife, the affection of his children, the fear of death?—for he resisted all these to fulfil his oath. Was he an unfeeling stoic? Nay!—but he was animated by that noble principle of Roman honor, which taught that death was preferable to a false, a mean, or a dastardly

action! And it was this controlling sentiment, expelling or subduing all others, which led him to prefer his heroic death to the violation of a Roman's word. It also preserved him from sacrificing the interests of his country to his own safety. It made him at once a patriot and a hero.

Thus, you may perceive that the influence of a noble principle is like the action of the centripetal force on the solar system. As that attractive energy steadily maintains the unity and order of the universe, so a lofty, comprehensive, authoritative principle subdues the thoughts, emotions and actions, to itself, and maintains a delightful harmony in the life of a young man, which commands the admiration and confidence of mankind. It is the wave-line of beauty, which, running through all his conduct, imparts gracefulness to each act, and dignity and propriety to his entire character.

It is, therefore, a question of great moment to every young man, where to obtain a principle sufficiently comprehensive and powerful to regulate all the parts of his conduct, so as to form one harmo-

nious whole. Some are satisfied with the sentiment of *honor*, such as ruled the Roman patriot. But that is obviously not sufficiently comprehensive. Your modern *men of honor* are gamblers, duellists, tyrants, Sabbath-breakers, drunkards, speculators, and the like; such things not being prohibited in the code of honor as established by public opinion, and the conduct of "*great men*," falsely so called. Neither is the law of *self-respect* sufficient. It doubtless does much to regulate life in the sphere of home, but is not proof against the temptations which assail men when abroad. Look, for instance, to the alarming fact, that the theatres, brothels, and other places of sinful resort in large cities, are chiefly supported by persons from the country. And who are these men from interior towns? What are they, when at home, but rigid moralists in appearance? Diligent, self-denying men in their general habits, but immoral on occasions and opportunities. The reason is obvious. They are restrained among their friends only by that low standard of *self-respect*, which fears degradation in the eyes of others, but shrinks not from being

mean in its own eyes, and guilty in the sight of God. It is not at all surprising, that such a flimsy defence against temptation often yields to a fierce and persevering assault.

A fearful illustration of the absolute powerlessness of these restraints, when the soul is powerfully tempted, is furnished in the case of the late Professor Webster. If ever mortal man was placed in a situation to maintain a high character, through motives of self-respect and honor, he was that man. Educated, highly respectable in his connections, moving in the most refined and elevated circles in social life, widely known through his connection with the mother of American universities, the husband of an accomplished wife, the father of amiable, lovely daughters, and the possessor of what ought to have been an ample income,— how could he fail of feeling in their full force the claims of honor and the demands of self-respect? For him to do a notoriously mean or unlawful act, was to fall from the loftiest pinnacle of social honor to the lowest valley of shame. He knew this. Hence, honor and self-

respect combined to keep him within the bounds of right and truth. But alas ! how ineffectual were these restraints ! Failing to reach the inner temple of the soul, they left him a prey to pride, extravagance and passion. Pushed by pride into extravagance, and by extravagance into embarrassments and by these again into acts of meanness, which, if proclaimed, would wound his haughty pride, his passions urged him to strike the desperate blow of murder, to free himself from the threatening danger. Passion won the day. He slew Patroclus, but fell into the hands of Achilles. By striking a man from existence whom he deemed his tormentor, he became a felon, and was dragged by the stern hand of the law from his high position to the scaffold ! Alas ! that his self-respect and his sense of honor should have failed to keep him from moral deformity and from crime ! That it did not is an obvious fact; and that it *cannot* be relied upon in the hour when the tempter does his utmost, is equally demonstrable, from the nature of the case, and from the history of mankind.

Far higher, therefore, must that young man look than mere honor or self-respect, who would attain to symmetry and stability of character. RELIGION alone can furnish him with a principle at once potent and comprehensive enough for his stern necessities. Religion establishes itself on the throne of the soul. It exerts its restraining and transforming power over the will, the intellect, and the emotions. It persuades, entreats, and it also commands with Divine authority. It lays the soul under the weightiest obligation to walk by its great all-embracing principle. “**W**HETHEE, THEREFORE, YE EAT OR DRINK, OR **W**HATSOEVER YE DO, DO ALL TO THE **G**LORY OF **G**OD.”

Here is a far-reaching principle, laying every act, thought, and motive, under contribution; demanding the utter negation of self, and the subordination of the entire man, physical and spiritual, to the law of God. As the mysterious magnet points unerringly to the northern pole of the earth, so does this law direct the soul of the young man to “*the glory of God.*” He must repudiate whatever act or thought dishonors his Creator; he must resolutely practise

everything, however it may crucify the passions, which tends to glorify the God of heaven. Here, then, is a principle suited to his necessities, whose operation, if submitted to, must, from the nature of the case, produce a lovely symmetry of character. It will bind and restrain unlawful passion, create integrity,—stimulate to energy, to self-culture, to industry, to economy, to tact, to everything that develops noble qualities and latent powers. Nor are its requisitions of impossible performance. The same authority which announces the law also vouchsafes power to obey. “Ye shall receive power from on high!” “My grace is sufficient for thee,” are the encouraging promises of the Law-giver to every willing recipient of his command. And so effectually is that aid vouchsafed to every submissive and believing mind, that, filled with conscious power, it can view all the temptations of the inner and outer life, and exclaim, “I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me !”

To religion, therefore, young man, do I earnestly commend you, as the surest means of attaining har-

mony of character. Only let the “glory of God run like a silver thread through all your actions,” and you shall stand forth before the world a symmetrical man, and hence, a man of power ; for

“ ‘T is moral grandeur makes the mighty man.”

14*

CHAPTER IX.

VICE AND ITS ALLUREMENTS.



ANTE, in his *DIVINA COMEDIA*, describes a broad-shouldered mountain rising before him, directly after he had gone astray “from the path direct.” Resolute of purpose, he prepared to journey “over that lonely steep;” but he says :

“ Scarce the ascent
Begun, when lo ! a panther, nimble, light,
And covered with a speckled skin, appeared ;
Nor when it saw me vanished ; rather strove
To check my onward going.”

Having overcome this beast, he adds :

“ A lion came 'gainst me as it appeared,
With his head held aloft and hunger mad,
That e'en the air was fear-struck. A she-wolf
Was at his heels, who in her leanness seemed
Full of all wants.”

Trembling before this new enemy, he was about to flee when a form appeared, who, in reply to his tears and entreaties, said :

“Thou must needs
Another way pursue, if thou wouldest 'scape
From out that savage wilderness. This beast
To whom thou criest, her way will suffer none
To pass ; and no less hindrance makes than death.”

The panther of Dante, with its soft, gay skin, is an emblem of voluptuousness in all its forms. The lion is the figure of ambition ; the wolf, of avarice. These three beasts beset and assail every traveller in the way of life. First comes the panther, when the passions wake to life in the young man's breast, striving to destroy him with the pleasures of lust and appetite. If by these means he is conquered,—if he permits himself to be charmed by illicit, sensual gratifications,—he sinks to the level of a brute ; and his body, his name, and deeds, speedily rot together. If he resist the panther, the insatiable cravings of ambition wake up, fierce as a lion, in his soul, and he is tempted to enter the lists where men do tilt

and tourney for the crowns of human fame. For these, if ambition triumph, he forfeits the crown of everlasting life! Should he resist, and seek distinction only as a means of honoring his Creator, the wolf of avarice next seeks his overthrow. Thus danger succeeds danger, until he perishes, or, by resistance and conquest, attains a noble sublimity of character; and, radiant in the rays of a virtue gained through the power of a religious faith, passes in triumph through the "everlasting doors," into the eternal paradise.

You, young man, are at the age in which the passions and appetites begin to clamor for indulgence. They glow with all the fervor of fierce desire, and prompt you to indulge yourself through means forbidden both by the constitution of your nature and the laws of God. Remember that your Creator has implanted these propensities within you for high and holy purposes. They are not necessarily debasing and imbruting in their tendencies. They only become so when, impatient of restraint, a youth lays the reins of control upon their neck, and bids them

dash with wild impetuosity across the Rubicon which flows along the borders between innocence and guilt, — right and wrong. But when, by the aids of reason and conscience, the triumphant soul becomes conscious of holding a high moral reign over the inferior body, it rapidly rises in dignity and in power. The very strength of these propensions, by calling the authority of the soul into existence, thus serves to promote its elevation and develop its greatness. Determine, therefore, young reader, to be above the servitude of the senses ! Let your intelligent soul, aided by Divine grace, point to the limit of Divine law, and say to the foamings of passion as God to the swelling sea : “*Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed!*” and the grace of Christ shall shut up your desires, as his Omnipotence has “*shut up the sea with doors.*”

One of your chief dangers, in this controversy with passion, is found in the fact that while religion, conscience, duty, cry “**RESTRAIN ! DENY !**” the world, through its pleasures and its adherents, cries “**EN-**

joy!" Hence, temptations and practical sanctions to vicious indulgence abound. Corresponding to the burning desires within, are abundant means to gratify them without. These means are so contrived as to hide the *miseries* of vice beneath dazzling and charming appearances. That wretched poet, BYRON, who wrote from the black depth of his own tormented spirit, thus describes it in his "*CHILDE HAROLD* : "

" Ah vice, how soft are thy voluptuous ways !
While boyish blood is mantling, who can 'scape
The fascination of thy magic gaze !
A cherub hydra round us dost thou gape,
And mould to every taste thy dear delusive shape."

Behold by yonder way-side a small and delicate tree, covered with a rich profusion of crimson bloom. As you stand at a distance, it strongly resembles a peach-tree covered with its beautiful blossoms. A nearer approach will undeceive you. Heaps of dead insects at your feet, and swarms of living ones floating round its bloom, and hastening to sip its fatal nectar, proclaim the poisonous nature of the gaudy shrub. Yon passing peasant boy will tell you it is

the "Judas-tree," or, in Indian phraseology, the "Red-bud."

Such is vice to every young novitiate:—charming to the eyes, exquisitely exciting to the senses, it allures the unwary youth to taste its forbidden pleasures. He sees the brilliant gayety of the saloon and the theatre. He hears the soft, voluptuous music of the orchestra and the ball-room. He gazes on the radiant faces of the dancers, and on the excited crowds who throng the portals of the drama. He observes the seductive glances of the "strange woman," until his blood boils, his head reels, his desires overcome him. "There *is* pleasure in these things," he cries. Then, heedless of the admonishing shade of his mother, which gazes sadly on his tempted spirit, scorning the monition of his moral guardian,—his conscience, which cries "Forbear,"—reckless of all but present joy, he flies to taste the forbidden nectar. One taste only inflames his soul the more. Like the insects on the Judas-tree, he heeds not the swarms of perished ones, but tastes and tastes again, until he is lost beyond redemption.

Stand with me, in imagination, young man, at the hour of midnight, and gaze upon the fire in yonder city. A large cluster of houses is wrapped in flames, which, roaring aloud, as if rejoicing in destruction, send their broad red sheets, and their ever-darting fiery tongues, far up into the gloomy sky. At length, they spread to an aviary containing nearly a thousand beautiful canary-birds. Unable to remove them, unwilling to stand and see them burned, their owner opens the doors of their prison-house, and the bewildered birds fly into the air. Mounted above the flames, they hover for a while in seeming safety. Now they whirl in circles above the fearful blaze, as if held by some irresistible fascination ; now, sweeping downwards and upwards, as if irresolute of purpose, they linger a little longer, until first one and then another drops into the burning pile, and every little songster is speedily destroyed.

Very similar are the fascinations of vicious pleasures. Once within the embrace of evil, a young man has little hope of escape. If he will not study its terrible consequences, before he enters upon its

practice, he will be either blind to their existence, or so fascinated by the spell exerted over his passions, that his escape will be next to an impossibility. So deadly is the infatuation of vice to a fallen young man, that the first indulgence by which he enters the path of the sensualist might almost claim the lines which DANTE has inscribed over the gate of hell :

“ Through me you pass into the city of woe,
Through me you pass into eternal pain,
Through me, among the people lost for aye.

* * * * *

All hope abandon ye who enter here.”

This is speaking very strongly, I am aware ; because the sensualist, whether drunkard, debauchee or glutton, *may* be pardoned and regenerated through the atonement of Jesus Christ. He *may*, such is the all-abounding grace of Christ, escape the bondage of vice, and win the freedom of a man of virtue. But the enervating influence and the ever-increasing potency of vicious indulgences are so great and so mighty, that there is little room to hope for the

recovery of a young man, who, having been trained to pure principles, descends to the corruptions of a bad life. Vice is like the terrible cobra di capello, which winds itself round its victim, and from its deadly fangs pours poison into his blood. So vice enslaves and destroys. Whoever is charmed to its embraces, finds himself enfolded in bonds of might, and poisoned with a morbid venom which irritates and stimulates his passions beyond the endurance of his vital powers ; until, with a diseased body, a hardened heart, and a remorseful spirit, he sinks to an untimely death, and is driven to stand, shivering with fear, before his God !

The history of mankind is a great commentary upon this truth. It is crowded with cases of those who, through the allurements of the passions, have madly rushed on ruin. They have seen fortune, fame, station, reputation, and even empire, sliding away from beneath their feet. Voices of friendship have stunned their ears with warnings. Ruin, with grim and horrid visage, has stared them in the face.

But, spell-bound, enchanted, charmed, they have heedlessly pursued their pleasures,

“Like birds the charming serpent draws,
To drop head foremost in his jaws,”

until the darkness of the second death swallowed them up forever!

Do you ask for particular examples? Let me lead you to that of **MARK ANTONY**, one of the triumviri who governed Rome after the assassination of Cæsar. He was the possessor of high military talents, the idol of his soldiers, the husband of the nobly born Octavia, and one of the chiefs of the greatest empire in the world. This man, as you know, was met, in the fulness of his strength and in the pride of his victories, by the luxurious Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt. Lured by her voluptuous wiles, he yielded himself up to a life of sensuous prodigality. The feast, the dance, the song, absorbed his time; the artifice and beauty of Cleopatra captivated his soul. Regardless of honor and duty, he divorced his wife. reckless of consequences, he wasted his resources,

neglected his fortunes, and saw without concern the preparations of his rival, Octavius, to secure his ruin. He lay, a self-abandoned victim, in the arms of his artful destroyer. No sense of honor, no idea of self-respect, no fear of overhanging consequences, could rouse him from his fatal entrancement. But the cloud soon burst over his foolish head, and in the midst of the storm, he lost empire, fame, and life, together!

Poor ROBERT BURNS, the bard of Scotland, is another illustration of the *power* of vice to retain its victim. His talents raised him from the obscurity of his early life to distinction. His generous independence of mind secured him the affections of those with whom he became intimate. With ordinary prudence, he might have spent his days in ease and independence. But his noble spirit was in the bonds of dissipation. Many, but vain, were his struggles after freedom. Innumerable were his resolves to conquer the habit which charmed and disgusted him by turns. The consciousness he felt concerning the utter hopelessness of his case, is touchingly ex-

pressed in the following lines, composed by himself as a prayer, in a fit of dangerous illness :

“ Fain would I say, ‘ Forgive my foul offence,’
Fain promise never more to disobey ;
But should my Author health again dispense,
Again I might desert fair virtue’s way,
Again in folly’s path might go astray,
Again exalt the brute and sink the man ;
Then how should I for heavenly mercy pray,
Who act so counter heavenly mercy’s plan —
Who sin so oft have mourned, yet to temptation ran ! ”

This melancholy subjection of soul to sense continued to the close of his life. His last illness was brought on by the dissipation of a winter’s night. He died in poverty, the victim of a folly which weakened his powers, dimmed the lustre of his fame, and shortened his days on earth. Pitiful sight, to see a soul possessed of such noble powers enslaved by a degrading vice ! How forcibly does the ruin of such minds prove the almost omnipotence of vice !

The case of RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN, the most brilliant orator of his times, is equally in point. What native greatness must have held its seat in

his soul ! What magnificence of intellect was that which gave birth to the eloquence, wit and argument, which drew from the glorious Burke the confession that the effect of his speech, in the case of Warren Hastings, was the “most astonishing of any of which there was any record or tradition ;” and from the great Mr. Pitt, the acknowledgment that it surpassed all the eloquence of ancient or modern times.” Yet, even his great soul was the slave of imperious passions ! Indolence, dissipation, prodigality, held him bound in chains of steel, and bore him to distress, anguish, poverty, and ruin. Vain were all his agonizing struggles after his lost moral freedom. This man, whose eloquence led princes to court his friendship, and compelled the admiration of his rivals in politics and oratory, was arrested by a sheriff’s officer for debt, on his death-bed ! What invincible strength ! What irresistible attractions ! What power to debase and to weaken must be lodged in vices which could pull down ruin on the head of such a princely intellect as that of Richard Brinsley Sheridan !

I have given these illustrations from the lives of what are called great mén, that the young man may see the power of vice over minds of the largest capacity. If such men found it impossible to escape, how can others encourage the hope of a better fate? Nay, dear youth, the only safe course for you is to **RESOLUTELY LET ALL VICIOUS INDULGENCE ALONE!** *“Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away: Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble.”*

The plea of every young mind that enters upon its novitiate in the school of vice is for only a little self-indulgence. The mind, while undefiled by positive contact with the sins of the senses, revolts from the idea of a wholly vicious life. It views such a life as the dogs of Egypt are said to fear the crocodiles which abound in the Nile. So intense is this fear, that, when impelled by fierce thirst to drink its waters, they do it as they run, not daring to pause long enough at once to satisfy their burning desires. Thus does the young man propose to taste illicit joys. He would only *taste* and flee, lest he should

be devoured! Alas! he knows not the terrible power he awakens, when he quaffs his first draught from the prohibited stream of pleasure! By that one act, he casts away the talisman of his safety, self-denial; he removes the curb from the mouth of lust, he pours foul water upon the virgin snow, and thus places an ineffaceable stain upon his purity; he contracts guilt, sows the seed of remorse, and sells his moral freedom for nought. A little indulgence? Never, young man! Allow it, and you are lost; blindness begins where vice first enchanteth. Beware, oh beware of this pestilential apology! Be like the knights of Tasso, who, on Armida's enchanted isle seeing all the enticements of sense voluptuously prepared and inviting to indulgence, exclaimed :

“ Let us avoid the dream
Of warm desire, and in resolve be strong ;
Now shut our ears to the fair Siren’s song,
And to each smile of feminine deceit
Close the fond eye.”

Thus resolved, the wiles and witcheries of Armida

da's luxurious groves and bewitching damsels were powerless ; for

“ To these wiles the knights in triple steel
Of stern resolve had shut their souls ; and hence
The tunes they sing, the beauties they reveal,
Their angel looks and heavenly eloquence,
But circle round and round, nor reach the seat of sense.”

Thus must every young man meet the *first* advances of vicious solicitation, if he would not be drawn into hopeless servitude. The saying of an odd writer, concerning courts of law, is applicable to the court of pleasure. He says, “ A man who goes to law finds the court full of invisible hooks. He turns round to disembarass himself from one, and straightway he is caught by another. First his cloak, then the skirts of his coat, then his sleeves, till ere long everything is torn from him, and, like a gypsy, he escapes because he is so stripped there is no further hold upon him.”

The youth who crosses the threshold of the court of vice will find these “ invisible hooks,” sharper and in greater abundance than in courts of law. Once

caught, he will be "*hooked*" in every direction. One tempter will succeed another, each handing him over to the next. Thus snared and dragged from vice to vice, until denuded of every virtue, he will at last, in all probability, perish in unutterable woe. Therefore, young reader, beware of the *first* lesson in vice! Your escape from destruction depends on your being strong in resolve to resist the first advances of illicit pleasure. "The bird which is ensnared by one leg is as surely the prey of the fowler as if it were seized by both wings." Or let one wheel of a watch be magnetized, it will attract all the other wheels to itself, and thus as effectually destroy its correctness as if every wheel was displaced. Beware, then, of one disordered passion — one ensnaring abomination!

I find a very appropriate illustration of the risk incurred by one indulgence in forbidden things in the life of the great Arabian impostor, MOHAMMED. In the course of his astonishing career of victory, he captured the citadel of Khaibar. A Jewish captive, named Zainab, determined to destroy the conqueror.

To accomplish her purpose, she prepared a subtle poison, an art in which she was exquisitely skilful, and introduced it into a shoulder of lamb, which was designed for the prophet's table. Her plot was undiscovered, and in due time the poisoned meat was set before the intended victim. Unsuspicious of danger, Mohammed began his repast. But at the first mouthful, perceiving something unusual in its taste, he spat it forth; but instantly felt acute internal pain. In that brief moment, he had imbibed enough of the poison to injure his constitution through the remainder of his life. Many were the severe paroxysms of pain he suffered from its potency. And in his dying moments, while undergoing intense physical agony, he exclaimed :

“The veins of my heart are throbbing with the poison of Khaibar !”

Young man ! believe me, your first taste of vicious pleasure, though it may not be succeeded by a second offence, may be as fatal to you as the poison of Zainab was to the oriental prophet ! HORACE MANN, in his noble “Thoughts for a Young Man,” has well

said: "The capital of health may all be forfeited by one physical misdemeanor." He might have added, that the capital of character, of moral purity, of self-respect, are all jeopardized by one transgression. Pause, therefore, at the threshold of the temple of infamy; and though a jovial companion, a witching seducer, may say, "*only this once,*" do you reflect and reply; "Nay! on a death-bed the veins of my heart may throb with the poison of this one sin."

"*Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?*" was the question of the psalmist, when viewing, as we have been doing, the allurements and power of vice. The question is timely and proper at this stage of our work. The answer of the experienced minstrel is equally in point: viz., "*By taking heed thereto ACCORDING TO THY WORD;*" that is, by securing the aid of religious power. Without this help from above, such is the tyranny of human passion and appetite, resistance is almost vain. Wrestling with their strength, the unaided youth will be compelled to exclaim, with a greater than himself, "*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body*

of this death ?" If, like that majestic apostle, he will fly to the grace of Christ, he will be enabled to join in his triumphal strains, and cry, "*Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us !*" and again—" *This one thing I do—I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection.*"

Fly, therefore, beloved young man, to the ark of our Divine religion for safety. There, the energy, the strength, the power of an inner life, shall be developed within you. Satisfied from within yourself, fortified by strong affection for virtue, and intense loathing against vice, you will be secure. Your character shall thus be lofty; your purity unspotted; your real enjoyment undiminished, yea, immeasurably increased; your name, instead of being "*writ in water,*" shall be engraved on the hearts of the good, and in the records of eternity.

CHAPTER X.

VICE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.



ITH what graphic beauty has the pencil of MOSES sketched the scenes of patriarchal life! How true to human nature, how instructive to a thoughtful mind, are his delineations of those ancient characters! But their highest encomium is their unquestionable truthfulness. Let us study one of these pictures, and carefully extract its precious moral.

Behold the venerable ABRAHAM standing in the door-way of his tent, with his vigorous and manly nephew, Lot, at his side! Lot is deeply agitated. The uneasy workings of restrained anger are visible

in his flashing eye, knitted brows, and earnest manner. Let us listen to his words :

“ Revered sire, our herdmen are at war with each other. Every day their contentions increase! Their strifes are not to be endured! What can be done ?”

Abraham, calm and dignified, replies, “ Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee ? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me. If thou wilt take the left hand, I will go to the right ; or, if you depart to the right hand, I will go to the left !”

Upon this, Lot gazes at the lovely landscape spread out around them. It embraces the fertile vale of the Jordan, rich in its herbage, its wells and fruits. True the vile inhabitants of Sodom live on its borders. But Lot has a worldly heart. He seeks only to be rich. Hence, on selfish and sinful principles alone, he selects the valley of the Jordan, and separating himself from his uncle, takes up his abode in the vale of Sodom, intent on acquiring and enjoying riches. Abraham removed his tent to Hebron.

Scarcely has Lot established himself in his new

home, before an invading army sweeps over the vale, and Lot, with his family and flock, is led away a prisoner. Abraham, with his good sword, hastens to his rescue, and he is restored. For a while, Lot now enjoys prosperity; but his children mostly fall into the vices of the place, and apostatize from God. The hour of Sodom's overthrow then arrived. Through the intercession of Abraham, Lot is warned of the impending danger, and leaving all his wealth and most of his children behind, he flees penniless to the mountains. On the way, his wife falls by the hand of God; and poor, destitute Lot, with two of his daughters, becomes the forlorn occupant of a mountain cave! How different was this result from the sanguine expectation which swelled his breast on the day when, for mere purposes of profit and enjoyment, he pitched his tent beside the gate of Sodom!

What a melancholy lesson lies on the surface of this sketch! How emphatically it teaches the doom of a worldly mind to disappointment! How like a warning voice should the fate of Lot ring in the ears

of the youth who is looking out upon the vale of life, and regarding the enchanting devices of evil with a strength of desire brooking no restraint ! The song, the dance, the revel, the theatre, the saloon, the gaudy sepulchre of departed virtue, all blend in the gay pictures of his fancy ; and he, like Lot, deliberately resolves to take up his abode in the vale of modern Sodom. Not that he intends to be as vile as others. O, no ! He is a perfect HAZAEL, contemplating vicious excess with a stern indignation which cries : *"Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing ?"* It is from limited indulgence he anticipates a harvest of delight. But, limited or excessive, the result is the same. Sinful pleasure, in all its Protean shapes, disappoints its victim. From the first delirious, intoxicating draught, to the last dreg in the cup, all is *disappointment*. Hear a veteran in the ranks of folly testify :

" When all is won that all desire to woo,
The paltry prize is hardly worth the cost.
Youth wasted, mind degraded, honor lost,
These are thy fruits, successful passion ! — these !
If, kindly cruel, early hope is crost,

Still to the last it rankles, a disease
Not to be cured when love itself forgets to please."

But why, if the first experiences of young profligates are succeeded by disappointment, do they persist? Because they vainly hope that other untried indulgences will yield greater pleasure. They fear the contempt of their more daring associates; but chiefly because passion is a tyrant, a perfect Haynau. When once freed from the golden chain of innocence, it usurps absolute authority, and drives its victim like a helpless slave to ruin. The drunkard knows but too well the terrible power of his ever-craving appetite. His reason, his affections, his self-respect, his dearest friends, his present and eternal interests, all stand at the bar of this inward monster, and plead in vain. It impels him, in spite of himself, to sink into deeper misery. The same is true of every other vicious habit. He who enters upon a vicious career is like the man who is lured by a false light to venture on the treacherous quagmire; once sunk in its fatal mud, every attempt to extricate himself only sinks him still deeper. Terrible, indeed, are his

efforts, awful his apprehensions, fearful is his prospect of destruction. If he does escape, it is as if by miracle. "He is *carnal, sold under sin.*" He has surrendered the helm of his soul to his baser nature. Nothing short of a complete abandonment of himself to religion can restore that lost helm to the hand of reason. That step he will not take, and therefore he *cannot* pause in his wicked career. And this is one portion of a sinner's penalty. The pleasure he invited as a guest to beguile his hours of leisure, becomes his master. He sees his ruin, yet rushes upon it. Abject, stung to the quick, irritated, agonized and tortured, he writhes in vain struggles to free himself from his tyrant. Despondency seizes his mind, and often, as in the melancholy case of the late Dr. Morton, a young English physician, he concludes the tragedy by rushing, an unbidden guest, into the spiritual world.

This Dr. Morton, who appears to have been a man of genius, had fallen into the vice of drunkenness. Many and fierce were his vain struggles for the mas-

terry, as may be seen by the following extract from his journal :—

“ I have only to remember my dreadful sufferings the morning after taking so much beer or wine. Low suicidal feelings, despondent and gloomy thoughts, pulse one hundred to one hundred and twenty, head dizzy, limbs tremulous, pains about the heart, flatulence and eructations, incapacity for duty of any kind, temper irritable and overbearing, expensive habits, loss of time, forgetfulness of engagements, everything in disorder,— and all for what ? *Because I choose to take two pints of ale or half a bottle of wine.*”

As already intimated, this accomplished but unhappy man, finding himself enslaved to his darling vice, died by his own hand at the early age of thirty-six—a sad monument of the terrible effect of vice on a superior mind !

BYRON has well described this despairing gloom which sooner or later overspreads the sinning soul :—

"And vice, that digs her own voluptuous tomb,
Had buried long his hopes, no more to rise,
Pleasure's palled victim! Life abhorring gloom
Wrote on his faded brow, cursed Cain's unresting doom."

This power of passion to coerce reason has a remarkable illustration in the case of **GEORGE WACHS**, a German youth, who was apprenticed to one Schneeweißer, a carpenter, at Sölling. This lad, the son of a small farmer, lived an irreproachably moral life until his eighteenth year, when he became dissolute in his habits. He then grew wanton, riotous, disorderly and lazy; fond of dress, and excessively vain.

On the eve of a public festival, this unhappy lad fell into the company of a young man who ostentatiously displayed a watch. Wachs, who did not own a watch himself, suddenly conceived a desire to do so. This desire rapidly grew into an irresistible passion. Happening to enter a shoemaker's house, shortly after, to have his boots mended, his eye lighted on that gentleman's watch, which hung upon a nail in the wall beside him. Just at that moment

the shoemaker's wife went out to market, and the children also left the house to play in the garden. Wachs and the shoemaker were alone. Impelled by his passion to obtain a watch, the dissolute youth stole behind his victim, and striking him with a large hammer on the temple, he killed him with a single blow. The wife returning shortly after, he murdered her also, lest she should betray him. To make discovery impossible, he killed "Little Michael," their son, and, as he supposed, their daughter, Catherine; who, however, subsequently recovered from her wound, and became the principal witness on his trial, which resulted in his decapitation by the sword.*

This is an extreme case, I admit, but it is valuable because it shows the fearful weakness of the man who once surrenders himself to the control of his propensities. It proves the trite but terrible truth, that there is no propensity which may not, when fostered by indulgence and favored by circumstances,

* See *Narratives of Remarkable Criminal Trials*. From the German of Anselm Ritter Von Feuerbach. Harper's edition.

grow into an irresistible passion, and hurry a man into the commission of monstrous crimes !

Another consequence of vice is the remorseful sense of shame, the guilty consciousness of self-degradation which overwhelms a young sinner. No sooner does he quit the infamous haunts of slaughtered innocence, and retire to the silence and the solitude of his chamber, than the image of his offence fastens upon his soul with all the tenacity with which ghoul and vampyre are said to seize their prey. Who can tell the full bitterness of the young soul when reviewing its fall ? The first violated Sabbath, or the first revel over the foaming wine-cup, or the first forbidden visit to the theatre, the gambler's den, or the chamber of pollution, is followed by fierce self-reproaches, by unutterable regrets, by unspeakable stingings of conscience ! With eyes downcast, hands clasped, and heart burning with anguish, the young man cries, " What have I done ? Fool that I was, to listen to my tempters ! What would my mother feel, if she knew my guilt ? How can I ever look her in the face again, with this

spot upon my soul ? And oh, if I should die in the guilty state ! Alas ! alas ! I am undone ! ”

Thus do showers of burning thoughts fall upon his tortured soul with a severity which Coleridge compares to “ needle-points of frost drizzling on a bald and feverish head.” At length, with many a weak resolve to go no further in sin, he falls asleep. When he awakes, his terrors have departed. His propensities resume their sway, and he is hurried into blacker transgressions. By persevering in sin, he succeeds in hardening his conscience, until for the time being it ceases its terrors, and he sins on, “neither fearing God nor regarding man.”

It is impossible to predict with certainty the specific mode by which an abandoned youth will reach the goal of ruin. Neither can it be told how long or how short will be his career. These things depend upon which propensity plays the tyrant over him ; upon his opportunities for self-indulgence ; upon his caution ; upon many circumstances entirely beyond his control. But this much is certain,—without speedy and effectual reform, HIS RUIN IS A MORAL

CERTAINTY! How long it will be delayed, or in what form it will come, cannot be predicted; but come it will, as surely as consequence succeeds to cause. For, "*though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished.*"

Sometimes the ruin of a vicious youth overtakes him with the swiftness of an arrow, as the following fact will show. A fine, noble-looking youth,—I will call him REGINALD,—who had been piously trained, left his virtuous home to dwell in a large city. At first, every returning Sabbath beheld him an attentive listener in the house of God. But he fell into the company of the wicked; resisted their seductions a while, then yielded. He now forsook the church for the haunts of pleasure. Being ardent in his temperament, he partook eagerly of every form of sin. The flowing bowl, the theatre, the gambling saloon, the brothel, witnessed his fiery zeal in the ways of iniquity. But his race was short,—his ruin terrible and speedy. *Three months* of guilty abomination sufficed to break down his physical constitution, and to lay his fine and noble form, a pitiful wreck, upon

a dying bed. Let us take our stand beside him and witness the end of a vicious life.

Mark his pale, attenuated face, covered with blotches, and distorted with the combined agonies of mind and body! How languid and dull are his glassy eyes! How painful his breathing! How that deep, hoarse cough incessantly racks his almost fleshless body! But hearken! some one raps at the door! See! the patient turns his eyes upon the intruder, with an expression of horror; then nervously clutching the bed-clothes, he buries his head beneath the folds, and obstinately refuses all conversation!

Who is this visiter? His countenance combines commanding dignity with bland benevolence, and is anything but offensive. Why, then, does the dying youth feel so disturbed by his presence? The reader will understand the reason, when he learns that he is Reginald's former pastor. His person revives the memory of purer days, and the guilty sufferer dares not to see him.

As Reginald will not converse, the good man offers a prayer, and, with his hand upon the door-latch, is

preparing to leave. But now the dying victim uncovers his face, sits up in the bed, and cries :

“Stop a minute, sir !”

The pastor returns to the bed-side. The sufferer's effort has exhausted his strength, and he has fallen back upon the pillows. As the minister bends over to catch his words, Reginald throws his skinny arms around his neck, and whispers, with awful emphasis, “I'M LOST !” Then, burying himself once more beneath the clothes, he resolutely refuses all further conversation. Reader, that utterance was his last, for he never spoke again ! How awfully did that dear, ruined young man verify the saying of Solomon : *“With her much fair speech she causeth him to yield ; with the flattering of her lips she forced him. He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the conviction of the stocks ; till a dart strike through his liver. As a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life !”*

There can be no doubt that such cases as this are far from being rare. Vice is a swift and sure de-

stroyer, and a youth who embraces her is as the early flower exposed to the untimely frost. Those who have perished thus are named "Legion," for they are many,—enough to convince every novice that he has no security that he shall escape a similar fate.

Nor is it always by disease alone a young profligate finds a speedy and fatal termination to his career. Ruin is a Briareus with many hands. As some large rivers debouch to the ocean through many mouths, so has vice many streams that lead to death. The vices, like the Furies, are sisters, and no man can espouse one without admitting the rest into his home. Hence, no sinner can tell whither his besetting sin will conduct him. Let the following *fact* illustrate and enforce this thought.

A young man, whom I will name **ARTHUR**, nineteen years of age, educated, handsome, of fascinating manners, and manly spirit, visited a certain city in search of business. There he unhappily fell into dissolute society, and began to run the giddy rounds of deep dissipation. A few months served to exhaust

his finances and to run him into debt. A bill lay upon his table, one day, which he was required to pay the next morning. Not knowing what to do, he took the fatal step of selling an opera-glass, which he had borrowed from a gay friend; and thus paid the bill. His friend called for the glass. Arthur, though much confused, frankly confessed his fault, and promised to obtain funds from home to remunerate the loser. But his quondam friend had the heart of a Shylock, and hurried the astonished and mortified young man to the police court, charging him with the crime of stealing the opera-glass. After a summary hearing, he was committed for trial, and immured in jail.

He was placed in a cell with another prisoner,—a young man. As soon as he found himself there, the full measure of his disgrace rose before his agonized mind. Casting himself to the ground, he cried to his fellow-prisoner, in tones of exquisite anguish :

“Cut my throat! kill me! trample me to death! My parents! How can I ever look them in the face again?”

He grew more and more excited, beat his head upon the stone floor with such violence that his companion seized him and called lustily for aid. The turnkey came, and judging from his paroxysms that he was in a fever, called for a physician, who pronounced him to be in imminent danger of dying. A distinguished philanthropist was sent for, who bailed the young man, and conveyed him to his own residence. Touched by the affectionate kindness of this benevolent man, the youth stated that his father was a clergyman, and his relatives wealthy. The peril of life being very great, his generous protector wrote an account of the sad affair, and summoned the father to his son's death-bed.

While the letter was on its way, during an interval of calmness, he was asked if he would not like to see his father once more.

“O no! Let me die rather—kill me! I have brought dishonor upon his gray hairs, and how can I look upon his face again? Let me die, but have pity on my poor father!”

The father arrived. "Your father is below, waiting to see you," said his attendant.

The sufferer uttered a piercing groan, covered his face, and exclaimed :

"I can't see him ! I can't—I can't ! Speak to him for me ; tell him I died — "

Here the venerable father entered, and stood transfixed with agony beside his dying son ! What a scene ! That noble boy, that cherished child, polluted with profligate habits, disgraced by crime, dying of mental torture — and that aged minister, that white-haired father, gazing unutterable pity, and pierced with anguish that beggars description ! Can aught of misery be fancied more exquisite or excruciating ? Yet, young man, that scene grew out of just such indulgences as you are feverishly panting to enjoy. Pause, I beseech you ! Examine well the ground you long to tread. Inquire seriously if you are prepared to receive the consequences before you set the cause in motion. For as surely as you abandon virtue, sooner or later, "*The Lord shall give thee a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of*

mind, and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night. In the morning thou shalt say, would God it were evening; and in the evening, would God it were morning: for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear; and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see ! ”

But a vicious life does not always come to so sudden and speedy a conclusion. God often suffers the sinner to fill up a *large* measure of sin, and to place the hour of retribution far off. When this is the case, the heart grows stout and bold. The conscience becomes blind, and dead to feeling. The fear of God is entirely cast off. Religion is treated as a fable. The Gospel is trampled under foot, and the man, made brutish, vile and abominable, becomes “*a vessel of wrath fitted to destruction ! ”*

Now, I doubt not that the reader, in the plenitude of his self-confidence, has thought himself strong enough to enter on vicious pursuits, without committing those crimes which destroy reputation, and lead to the prison. Well, he may stop short on the brink. The thing is abstractly possible,—just as a

man *might* gallop a furious horse down a steep path which terminates at a precipice with a deep gulf beneath, and rein up his beast at the very brink. But the peril would be so imminent, none but a madman would venture on the experiment. So you may give passion the reins until it carries you close to *crime*, and then resume the bridle and save yourself. The risk is fearful, however, and no prudent youth will dare to incur it.

There are two facts which the uninitiated young sinner does not duly weigh. The first is, that vice so deadens the moral sense, and so blinds the mind, that *crime* does not appear the same *horrible thing* as it did in the happy days of innocence. The second is, that the cost of illicit pleasures exceeds the resources of most young sinners. Once taken in their net, the foolish youth is too weak to break the entangling meshes. He *must* sin on. Hence, he *must* have money. Honorably he cannot obtain it. The card-table, the dice-box, billiards, lotteries, and other modes of gambling, invite him to replenish his empty purse by their aid. The poor dupe tries, and

finds himself fleeced and reduced to extremities. What is to be done ? He has gone too far to retrace his steps. Yet, he must extricate himself in some way. The tempter whispers the guilty thought of robbing his employers. He starts back at the mere idea of such an act. But his debts are pressing upon him, his habits are expensive, his passions imperious. Again the tempter whispers in his heart. The idea haunts him by day and by night, until by familiarity its malign aspect loses its power to terrify. The attempt is resolved on, but on some specious mental pretence of afterwards restoring what is to be taken. The opportunity offers itself. The deed is done, and the young sinner trembles to find himself a thief ! Gradually his fears depart. Finding himself undetected, he steals again, until it becomes his settled practice to embezzle the property of his employer, in order to pay the expenses of his lusts. Discovery comes, at length, and he who began his career by going to a theatre ends it in the shame and ignominy of a prison. As said a weeping and disconsolate mother, one day, to a minister, who, seeing her

distress, asked, "What is the matter with you, madam?"

"O my child! my child! He is just committed to prison! O, that theatre! He was a virtuous, kind youth, until the theatre proved his ruin." Nor was this woman's son an exception. The commissioners of the Pentonville prison, in Great Britain, affirm that ninety-five per cent. of the criminals in British jails were made so by vices, whose cost, exceeding their incomes, led to the perpetration of crime! How dangerous a thing is vice! Who is safe, when so many have fallen? Young reader, beware! Crime and imprisonment are the legitimate consequences of sinful indulgences. Hence, if you shudder at the idea of being the inmate of a jail, beware of the first step in the way thereto.

Would you know somewhat of the effects of vice upon that physical constitution which it does not immediately destroy? Then, mark that man who is slowly toiling along the street, leaning upon his cane. With what difficulty he drags one emaciated leg after the other! How thin and angular are his form

and features! Every slow movement proclaims his excessive languor. There is no health or vigor in his motion. His breath is short. A weak, hollow cough, distresses him. His face is pale as death. His eyes, covered with a glassy film, have no expression. His whole appearance is that of abject misery. But see, he has seated himself on that door-step to rest! Let us question him as to his sufferings. Hearken, as in a low, husky voice, he details his list of pains! "My head," he says, "is always dizzy. I have a constant headache. My memory is gone, and I cannot confine my mind to any subject of thought. I find it difficult to apprehend an idea; labor or study are loathsome to me. My strength is all gone. My back, my sides, my limbs, are in constant pain, and my mind and body are sinking into utter ruin!"

This is terrible. Suppose we ask, "What brought you into this state, friend?"

Hear his reply, as he gazes upon us with a look of unutterable despair: "*I brought it all upon myself, BY INDULGENCE IN SOLITARY AND SOCIAL VICES!*"

Sad confession ! Nevertheless, my picture is from life. Vice makes war upon every function in the human body. The brains, the heart, the lungs, the liver, the spine, the limbs, the bones, the flesh, every part and faculty, are overtaxed, worn, weakened, by the terrific energy of passion and appetite loosed from restraint, until, like a dilapidated mansion, the "earthly house of this tabernacle" falls into "ruinous decay."

I have already described the tumult awakened in the conscience of a young profligate by his first steps in the wrong direction ; and also the agony, despondency and misery, occasioned by a discovery of his inability to break his self-imposed bonds. The former state of mind is usually followed by one of hardened indifference, until the latter commences. But this settled gloom, bad as it is, does not compare in its terribleness with the more fearful sufferings of his heart when, toward the close of earthly existence, he is visited by the horrors of **REMORSE**, that frowning "rock that stops the current of our thought to God." Then,

“ The past lives o'er again
In its effects, and to the guilty spirit
The ever-frowning present is its image.”

Then he understands the truth of Coleridge's striking lines : —

“ Just heaven instructs us, with an awful voice,
That conscience rules us, e'en against our choice.
Our inward monitress to guide and warn,
If listened to ; but, if repelled with scorn,
At length, as dire remorse she reappears,
Works in our guilty hopes and selfish fears,
Still bids *remember* and still cries *too late*,
And while she scares us, goads us to our fate.”

How much a sinner suffers from the sting of remorse, no pen can describe, no heart can fancy. “ The agonies inflicted by the wolf that fed on the life-stream of the Spartan, the poison injected by the tooth of the viper, or the three-fanged sting of the scorpion, are as nothing when contrasted with the stings of an accusing conscience. Most truly has an American writer observed that there is no manliness or fortitude can bear up under the horrors of guilt. The thing is done ; yet it rises, in all its vivid color-

ing, to the soul that has incurred it, overwhelming it with remorse and despair. The reproaches of conscience, once thoroughly aroused, can neither be silenced nor borne. No human spirit can sustain its energies under such a burden, when it really comes." Hence, notorious criminals, who have denied their crimes while stretched on racks and wheels, have subsequently surrendered themselves to justice through the fiercer torments of remorse. To confirm these remarks, I submit two or three confessions which fell from the lips of some wretched victims of remorse.

"I would die,—I dare not die! I would live,—I dare not live! O, what a burden is the hand of an angry God!" exclaimed the terrified Viscount Kenmuir, in his dying moments.

"Is your mind at ease?" asked Dr. Turton, of the departing Oliver Goldsmith, as he lay tossed with an anguish deeper than what his disease occasioned.

"No, it is not!" was the sad reply of the once gay and jolly author of "The Deserted Village,"

as, deserted of God, he fought his last battle with Death.

“I feel the weight of God’s wrath burning like the pains of hell within me, and pressing on my conscience with an anguish which cannot be described!” cried the apostate Francis Spira, when writhing in the agonies of death.

“My dear, you appear as if your heart were breaking,” said a weeping lady to her dying infidel husband, whose distress appeared to be unendurable.

“Let it break! Let it break! but it is hard work to die!” he replied. Then directing a glance toward heaven, he cried,

“Lord, have mercy! Jesus save!” and died.

Now, all this is most shocking to contemplate. What, then, must its endurance be? And it is nothing more than the harvest gathered from a vicious life. Every illicit enjoyment is a seed of such torment as this. The guilty revel over the wine-cup, the scoff at religion, the sneer at piety, the hilarity of the dance, the embrace of lust, the violated Sabbath, the profane expression, are each

and all the substances of those images which rise up, grim and ghostly, to torment the remorseful sinner. If, then, my dear young friend, you tremble at the consequences, shun the cause— sow not the seed— touch not the sin— stray not from the side of virtue ! But if you will, despite of all warning voices, seek to know the mysteries of vice, then I say to you, in the language of inspiration :

“Rejoice, oh young man, in thy youth ; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes ; BUT KNOW THOU THAT FOR ALL THESE THINGS GOD WILL BRING THEE INTO JUDGMENT. THEREFORE, PUT AWAY EVIL FROM THY FLESH !” Seek the aids of pure religion. Cleave to purity, quiet, and virtue, and thus you “*shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.*”

CHAPTER XI.

VICE AND ITS SEDUCERS.

“Come home! — there is a sorrowing breath
In music since ye went;
And the early flower-scents wander by,
With mournful memories blent.
The tones in every household voice
Are grown more sad and deep,
And the sweet word — *brother* — wakes a wish
To turn aside and weep.”



THESE exquisite lines, by MRS. HEMANS, give a beautiful expression to those tender affections which plead with every young man to maintain his affinity with home and its virtuous pleasures. They show the strength of those restraining influences with which God would fain hold the young sinner back from vice. All its love and all its friendship plead with him, weep over him, wait for him. Though by his profligacy he has dug a gulf between it and himself, yet it maintains an unalien-

ated regard, and with open arms and unutterable emotion, cries, "Come home!" Holy love! Affection almost divine! How strange, that the voices of lust and infamy should ever exert a more controlling power over a young man's spirit than these loving voices of home!

Yet so it is in every instance of youthful delinquency. The false-hearted victims of foul iniquity sway his soul, and render him deaf to the pleadings of his best and purest friends. His foolish heart yields itself up to vicious seducers, whose only aim is his destruction. A fashionable popinjay, a foppish blackguard, a gambler, a filthy harlot, is permitted to silence and push aside a venerable father, a fond mother, a pure sister, and a noble brother! This fact alone exhibits the hatefulness of vice, and should cause a young man to seriously pause before placing a foot on the accursed threshold of its infamous temple. To describe the seducers to vice, and to caution my reader against them, are my aims in this chapter.

Bad books and impure pictures are among the first

corrupting instrumentalities which debase a young mind. With the former may be ranked the innumerable novels which are perpetually issuing from unprincipled presses; all kinds of amorous poetry; and a class of filthy books, pretending to be medical, physiological, and instructive, while in reality they are only disgusting stimulants to unholy, prurient desires. Among the latter are those engravings and paintings, whether in books or papers, or on the covers of snuff-boxes, &c., which, from their immodesty, are calculated to defile the mind and call the latent depravity of the heart into action. These vile productions of misdirected art the young man who values his moral character must refuse to see. If they are brought under his notice, he must resolutely turn away his eyes from gazing upon them; for as sure as he takes pleasure in them, he will be undone. So of novels; they must be rejected with invincible determination.

But are all novels to be eschewed? Are not some of them pure both in style and tendency? To this last question I reply, it is true that some novels are

better than others; in themselves they may be unspotted. Yet in one point they do harm; they create a taste for fictitious reading. This taste soon acquires the intensity of a passion. The mind acquires a craving for excitement, and thus the youth, who begins by revelling among the splendid paintings of SIR WALTER SCOTT's pen, or by subjecting himself to the quiet enchantment of FREDRIKA BREMER's spirit, will speedily seek the works of more impassioned authors. He will hasten from DICKENS to JAMES, from James to BULWER, from Bulwer to AINSWORTH, from him to EUGENE SUE, and finally he will steep his polluted mind in the abominations of that Moloch among novelists, PAUL DE KOCK. By this time he is ready for destruction. By venturing into the pleasant ripple, he has been tempted to sport in the heaving breakers, until, caught by the resistless under current, he is borne out to sea, and meets a premature death. How much better to have avoided the ripple! Young man, beware of reading your first novel!

But alas! this counsel is probably too late. You

are already under the spell of the charmer, and can hardly tolerate these censures. Not that you have no doubts concerning the effects of such reading, but you *love* it—passionately love it! You demand proof of the evil charged on these works.

Such proof is to be found in the experience of all novel-readers. Every such person knows that they *corrupt the heart, through the imagination*. They portray persons, characters and scenes, to the imagination, which, being viewed there, inevitably bestir the lowest propensities of poor, fallen nature. The thief, the blasphemer, the sceptic, the seducer, the gambler,—ideal wretches, whose actual presence in our home would be deemed a disgrace,—are freely introduced into the “chambers of imagery,” and permitted to utter all their filthy conversation, and to do their disgusting deeds, directly before the mind. Can this be done with impunity? Nay! As well might one hope to handle melted pitch and avoid defilement; for the imagination cannot be polluted by vile images, without causing the heart to give forth depraved eruptions!

These eruptions may not take place at once. They may delay to show themselves for a time, but the igniting spark is there and only awaits a proper combination of circumstances to break forth. "Behold a fire smouldering and slumbering amid a heap of cinders. For a time it makes no progress; it dwells in darkness. One would suppose it had made up its mind for extinction. But judge not too hastily. The mass around has been penetrated by the heat, and prepared for its function. The fire has been blending itself with the cinders, and is ready to break out: Stir them once more. Clear them for the draught. Touch them once more, and the whole will break out into a conflagration." Thus it is with pernicious images in the mind. Their influence permeates the spirit. They fire the heart; they prepare the senses. Then comes the guilty opportunity, and the breath of the tempter. The spark ignites. The soul is in a blaze of passion. The sin is committed. The deed is done: and guilt binds its fearful burden upon the conscience, with chains of triple steel !

DANTE has delicately described the sad result of

inflaming the heart through such vile books. In his imaginary journey through perdition, he describes his interview with PAOLO and FRANCESCA, an Italian lord and lady who were put to death for the crime of adultery. After questioning the guilty lady concerning her sin, he gives the following lines as her answer to his inquiries. She says :

"One day
For our delight we read of Lancelot,*
How him love thralled. Alone we were, and no
Suspicion near us. Oft times by that reading
Our eyes were drawn together, and the hue
Fled from our altered cheek. But at one point
Alone we fell.

* * * * *

"The book and writer both
Were GUILT's purveyors. In its leaves that day
We read no more."

The poet has shown, in this exceedingly delicate passage, how a bad book became the instrument of an evil which cost the virtue and lives of the parties. With these views before him, will any young man,

* The hero of the old romance. He was one of the knights of the famous Round Table.

who sets the least value upon his innocence, dare to run the risk of losing it for the sake of the dangerous pleasure afforded by a corrupting book? If my young reader has already fallen into the snare, let him glance a moment at his peril, and escape while he may. For though, by some extraordinary measure of Providence, he *may* escape from utter ruin, yet he cannot by any possibility avoid a high degree of hurt to his intellectual and moral nature. If, as TENNYSON has written, every man may truly say,

“I am a part of all that I have met;”

and if, as a writer in the Edinburgh Review beautifully remarks, “the stream will make mention of its bed,—the river will report of those shores which, sweeping through many regions and climes, it has washed,—then those currents of thought whose sources lie afar off” must be affected by the quality of the books through which it has run. The character must be more or less modified by the intellectual companionships of its early years. Reject, therefore, with virtuous horror, every book, however

fascinating or eloquent it may be, which tends to stimulate any evil propensity of your nature. Turn from it with disgust. It is a seducer of virtue, a pander to vice,—an evil to be abominated, shunned and dreaded.

Next to bad books comes *the influence of abandoned companions*. To seduce the innocent into a depth of iniquity as deep as that into which themselves have fallen, is the delight of bad men. Some do this for what they may gain of their unhappy dupe; others, for the fiendish pleasure it affords a depraved heart to see itself equalled in wickedness by kindred minds. Mind, like air, seeks its equilibrium. Hence, a virtuous youth may settle it as an indisputable fact, that his guilty companions will either drag him down to their level, or he must raise them up to his. Otherwise, they must cease intercourse.

It is rare that a novice in iniquity falls at once into the hands of finished seducers. Novices are usually reached at first by young men of their own age, who have recently taken their first degrees in

glaring sin. The merry, roysterer jollity of such sinners, their gayety of spirit, their apparent happiness, the glowing descriptions they give of their festivities, the sly hints they throw out at the *greenness* of the uninitiated, the half-playful, half-earnest banterings with which they greet their bashful excuses for not joining in their vices, are the first seductive influences which usually reach young men from the wicked. By these means they learn to love their society; they lose their relish for the purity and quiet of home; they feel mortified at their ignorance of iniquitous practices; until, surrendering themselves to the guidance of these children of sin, they take costly lessons for themselves in Sabbath-breaking, in drinking revels, and in forbidden visits to that pandemonium of all evil, the theatre.

Here, then, young man, is the turning-point of your destiny. When your heart first feels enchanted by young men whom you know to be the occasions of grief to their friends and of suspicion to their employers, your danger is imminent and extreme. The fact that you fail to discern the full enormity of their

practices, is the sign that you are marked for destruction. There is a certain bird which prepares its prey for its talons, by fluttering over its head and blinding its eyes with the sand with which it previously covers itself. The brilliant devices of gay sinners, like sand, blinding your eyes to the consequences of sin, fit you to be their prey. Now, therefore, or never, is your opportunity to escape. Break away at once from their snares, or you are undone. Once abandoned to their influence, you are lost. They will lead you from sin to sin, until you are as highly accomplished in the arts of vice as the worst. Remember, that "evil companions will blight in you the delicate flower of innocence, which diffuses itself around youth as a sweet perfume."

Among the more finished seducers to vice are the gambler, the libertine, and the sceptic. These are walking pestilences, less merciful to their victims than the howling wolf to the bleating lamb. Woe unto the young man who falls into their power!

The *gambler* is usually a drunkard. He needs the stimulus of spirits to sustain the excitements of

the card-table. He has no principles of honor, or integrity; for cheating is his trade. He has no pity. His heart is as adamant. He will fleece his victim of the last penny he has in the world, though he knows the poor dupe has a starving family at home, and will either go forth from his den to become a robber, or to rush unbidden into the presence of his God. He has the body of a man, but the spirit of a devil. It is his meat and his drink to destroy and ruin his fellow-creatures. Yet, this is the man who will greet a young man with smiles and with flattery; who will praise his skill, laud his courage, and predict his success at the gaming-table. This is the man to whom silly youths surrender themselves. Will you, my reader, study this etching well? Imprint it on your memory, and, if ever you are unhappily lured into his den, call it up in its freshness, and let it hold you back from becoming either his victim or his representative.

The *libertine* is a beast in human form. He is a man enslaved in chains, self-wrought and riveted by his own hands. The dignity of his manhood is

obliterated. Every noble human quality, every elevating attribute of character, and every God-like trait, are defaced, blurred and buried underneath the teeming vices of sensuality. His very aspect proclaims his deep degradation. In place of the calm intellectuality which robes a virtuous countenance with grace and splendor, is the downcast, expressionless look of the mere animal. His neglected and stunted soul, long enchain'd, like a galley-slave, by the tyrannical senses and passions, seems to have lost its high powers of reasoning and willing, and to tamely endure a bondage it cannot escape. A corrupt and loathsome wretch, the libertine sins on, until his filthy body tumbles, a heap of ruins, into an oblivious grave.

Do such disgusting creatures as these ever become the seducers of virtuous young manhood ? They do ! For even they can lure with the tongue. They can draw inflaming pictures to the fancy ; they can sneer at the ignorance of innocence ; they can persuade the unwary youth to venture across the threshold of infamy. They find infamous pleasure

in the overthrow of virtuous resolve. Woe, therefore, to him who dares to venture into their society! They begin their efforts by hints, and as TUPPER properly remarks,

“Hints shrewdly strown mightily disturb the spirit,
The sly suggestion toucheth nerves, and nerves contract the
fronds,
And the sensitive mimosa of affection trembleth to its root.”

Libertines understand this principle. Hence, they are careful to captivate by sly innuendoes, and not to disgust by gross description. When their victim is sufficiently blunted in his moral sensibility, and excited in his passion, they lead him, half reluctant, half willing, into the path of the “strange woman.” The word of God graphically describes the unhappy simpleton, who suffers himself to be thus beguiled :

“I beheld,” says the wise man, “among the simple ones ; I discerned among the youths A YOUNG MAN VOID OF UNDERSTANDING, passing through the street near her corner ; and he went the way to her house, in the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night.”

How striking is this picture ! How life-like its pencilling of the young man who is laboring to break down the last bulwark of virtue in his soul ! His already polluted mind, brought into subjection by the baser passions, impels him, when the sun is down, to venture within the precincts of iniquity. He walks around the place of vile resort, as if inviting the temptation of the wretched creatures who abide there. Later in the evening, he repeats his walk ; just as the moth returns to the flame of the lamp. At length, the hour most fitted for crime arrives, — “the black and dark night.” And continues Solomon, “Behold there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtile of heart. So she caught him and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him : ‘Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning.’ With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him. **HE GOETH AFTER HER STRAIGHTWAY, AS AN OX GOETH TO THE SLAUGHTER, OR AS A FOOL TO THE CORRECTION OF THE STOCKS !**”

Such is the process of ruin. Let the reader study

this description until he feels an irrepressible loathing toward that impudent seducer of virtue, and a terrible dread of standing in the place of that simple youth. For, awful indeed is the fate that awaits him. His sin will cause "*a dart to strike through his liver!*" The house he enters is "**THE WAY TO HELL, GOING DOWN TO THE CHAMBERS OF DEATH.**" The feet of the woman he follows "**GO DOWN TO DEATH: HER STEPS TAKE HOLD ON HELL.**" Her power is so resistless, that "*none that go to her return again: neither take they hold of the paths of life.*" She binds them fast in her bonds, until they "**mourn at the last when THEIR FLESH AND THEIR BODY ARE CONSUMED!**"

Are not these fearful descriptions sufficient to call a vow from your heart, young man, never to fall into such hands? or to induce you, if you are deceived by some diabolical wretch, as was a young man I will call **PETER PERCY**, and led to the snare, to burst it and depart? Peter was conducted by a designing companion into a house of ill repute, whose character he did not even suspect. His pretended

friend led him into a chamber, introduced him to a poor, fallen creature, and, turning away, locked the door, and left him, as he thought, a sure prey to the charmer. But virtue was strong in Peter's soul. He saw his danger at a glance. To parley was to fall. Running to the window, he beheld a distance of several feet between him and the ground. To leap, might make him lame for life. To refrain, might spot his soul forever. What is a physical hurt, compared with moral pollution? Nothing! So thought Peter; and he leaped from the window to the ground unhurt. A noble and manly act. It probably saved Peter's body from destruction, and his soul from hell. Young man, "Go thou and do likewise!" Ever be ready to say to libertine or harlot: "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Thus shall you "*find life, and obtain favor of the Lord.*"

The *sceptic*, the third I named among the finished seducers to vice, is usually a greedy devourer of souls. Miserable, unprincipled, given over to work iniquity, he has an appetite, for ruined souls, as insatiable as that of the serpent in the garden.

tiable as the horse-leech or the grave. Though every sentence he utters against God and revelation stings his own soul like an adder, yet he pours forth his proud and haughty blasphemies in floods of irony, sarcasm, and jests at sacred things. Furious in his temper, he brooks no denial of his monstrous doctrines. A mere sciolist in reality, he makes a great show of knowledge by quoting a few passages he has picked up from infidel books, and thus often confounds the modest youth whom he assaults. Merciless as a catamount, he would corrupt the purest human mind on earth, though he knew it would thereby be brought down to the misery of the hell whose unceasing fires burn within his own bosom. His grand instrument of seduction is contempt. He sneers at truth, and then hypocritically asks his intended victim if a man of sense and mind *can* believe such nonsense. Thus, by degrees, he induces young men to grow proud of their imaginary superiority, and to feel ashamed of revealed truth. This accomplished, the remainder of his satanic task is easy; for as waters flow readily when the obstructing

dam is demolished, so, when belief in God and revelation is shaken, sin flows unrestrained from the depraved heart.

Beware, then, of the sceptic ! Keep away from his person ! Would you inhale the breath of the pestilence ? Would you rush into the folds of a serpent ? Would you leap into the enraged ocean ? Yet either of these things is as proper to be done as to place yourself under the influence of a sceptic ! Shun his society, therefore ! Be satisfied to know that the best thing infidelity ever did, even for its princes and champions, was to corrupt their lives and to fill them with unutterable remorse. “LORD HERBERT, HOBBS, LORD SHAFTSBURY, WOOLSTON, TINDAL, CHUBB, and LORD BOLINGBROKE, were all guilty of the vile hypocrisy of lying.” ROCHESTER and WHARTON were profligates. Woolston was a gross blasphemer. BLOUNT, a suicide. VOLTAIRE was noted for “impudent audacity, filthy sensuality, persecuting envy, base adulation,” tyranny and cruelty. ROUSSEAU was a thief, a liar and a profligate.* Need

* See Horne's Introduction, chap. 1., pages 24—26.

I say more ? With such historical examples before his eyes, what young man will dare to suffer a sceptic to throw his seductive influences around him ? Surely my reader will flee from him as for his life.

Evil companions are, therefore, to be totally avoided. Safety is to be purchased only at the price of entire abstinence from their society ; for, as he who tastes his first glass of intoxicating drink has no security against becoming a drunkard, so he who finds a little delight in the society of partially corrupted persons has abandoned the ground of absolute safety. He is within a charmed circle. The incantation has begun. The demon of the circle is nigh. Soon will he present the bond by which the young dupe will sign away his virtue, his hopes, his soul. Beware ! oh, beware, then, of every one of the seducers to vice ! Reject the bad book ; turn away from the vile picture ; refuse your company to the wicked ! Seek God and his children ; so shall you happily escape the dangers of life, and win a crown of eternal glory !

CHAPTER XII.

COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE.



EHOLD yonder mass of barren rock, without a tuft of moss or lichen upon its surface! The wind rises, and a cloud of dust fills the air. A portion of this dust lodges in the numerous interstices of the rock, and ere long a tiny tuft of moss, borne on the wings of the breeze, or dropping from a neighboring tree, falls into a crevice filled with dust, vegetates, spreads, and covers the rock with a carpet of green.

The moss decays and grows again. The stratum increases. Other plants spring up from seeds wafted to the spot by the ever-changing wind. These grow and rot, thereby increasing the depth of the soil, until, in the progress of time, it acquires depth sufficient to nourish the noblest forest trees.

These humble mosses also powerfully attract moisture from the clouds, which, trickling through every crevice, finds its way to the lowest nook, accumulates, becomes first a rivulet, then a brook, a cascade, a river. This, flowing into the ocean, forms clouds by evaporation, and once more falls to fertilize the earth.

Thus does an observant philosopher describe the great results which nature brings forth from small beginnings. Yet, how many never dream of consequences from a cloud of dust! It is too small a matter to awaken a thought. So of a myriad more of nature's labors. They are the workings of an Invisible, Omnipotent God—the necessary processes of the world's existence. But men pass blindly on, and see nothing in them sufficiently significant to arrest their attention.

There is a corresponding blindness concerning many of those human actions whose consequences reach far into the future of man's existence. The commencement of that affectionate intercourse between a youth and a maiden, called courtship, is an

example. How little is thought of the first budings of love between two young persons ! By the parents it is often deemed a fitting subject for joke and laughter. The parties themselves, conscious chiefly of a mutual attraction, abandon themselves to romantic visions of future bliss, and to efforts to please each other. Little do they dream that from their gay and lightsome intercourse is to proceed a stream of exquisite delight, or of burning poison, running parallel, perhaps, with their immortal existence. Yet so it is. A life of bitter, bitter anguish, or of as much happiness as is permitted to mortals on earth, lies enclosed in the, but too lightly esteemed, state of courtship. Next to marriage, it is the gravest and most solemn affair relating to life this side the grave.

Erroneous views of courtship have their foundation in low and ignoble ideas concerning marriage itself. How is marriage regarded by most young men ? Alas ! is it not viewed chiefly as a legal method of gratifying the sexual appetite ? — as "a means of sensual gratification," — "for the mere

physical purpose of the continuance of the race?"* With these views of marriage, is it at all surprising that the courtship which stands in so intimate a relation to it is carried on in a light, unworthy, and even impure spirit? Is it wonderful that the parties frequently violate the laws of modesty, and become guilty before God and man? Is it strange that moral and intellectual affinities and repugnances are overlooked and disregarded? Nay, the wonder is, that these things are not more common.

Now, young man, I wish you, as a moral and intellectual creature, to open your eyes, and behold with grateful wonder the noble designs of God, which lie hidden beneath this question of marriage. True, it has a physical purpose to accomplish. By it our species are to be continued in the healthiest and purest manner. But running parallel with this is the higher, nobler, loftier design of developing the purest affections of the heart, and the loveliest excellences of our nature. As DR. WARE has well said,

* See a recent work by Dr. Ware, called "Hints to Young Men on the True Relation of the Sexes."

“ The permanent union of one man with one woman establishes a relation of affections and interests which can in no other way be made to exist between two human beings. Without it, no individual can be considered as having answered the whole purpose of his existence — of having arrived at the full development of which he is capable. He is incomplete and imperfect. He has tendencies, capacities, powers for good, which have never been called out, which he may not know even to exist. Domestic life, and the domestic relations, are the essential element of human happiness and human progress, so far as our moral and spiritual character are concerned. From the relation of the sexes springs all that gives its charm, its grace, its true value, to human intercourse. It creates the domestic circle. It gives origin to the sacred relation of husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister, and those thousand endearing relations which arise from them. Strike out from the life of man all the hopes, interests, and motives, which grow out of this relation, and what were left

him but a cheerless, a desolate, and a merely brutal existence?"

These are just and elevating views of marriage. How superior to those "abject and licentious doctrines, destructive of the conjugal tie, which certain classes of infidels endeavor to spread abroad in the world! Reject, with horror and disgust, such hideous teachings! They would degrade you to the level of the brute." Indulge purer and holier opinions, and you will thus "give yourself no reason to blush before the chaste and faithful dove, nor degrade the sacred character imprinted on your brow by the finger of God." Your heart will give forth a pure affection, worthy of your exalted nature, and fit to be offered to the spotless maiden whose charms of heart and mind may attract you to her side. And remember you cannot entertain opposite opinions without debasing and degrading yourself and your betrothed, by the intercourse implied in courtship. Neither can your marriage be truly "honorable," unless it be contracted on these scriptural and exalted principles.

With these opinions deeply impressed on his mind, a young man is prepared to commence a truly virtuous and elevating courtship. Accidental, spontaneous and thoughtless, as first intimacies between the sexes are apt to be, he will nevertheless be induced to pause and reflect before acquaintanceship ripens into a positive betrothal. Looking at the true ends of marriage, he will inquire if the lady, towards whom his love is blossoming, possesses those qualities of heart and intellect which are suited to answer those ends. If she does not, though he *may* yield to the impulses of his passion, yet he will be far more likely to hesitate, before soliciting her hand in marriage, than he would be if his views were of that degrading nature before animadverted upon. And if ever caution is needed, it is here. Mistake is so easy. Undesigned duplicity is so natural. The lady, wreathed in smiles and moving with cautious effort to conceal defects of temper and intellect, acquires an almost irresistible influence over his feelings. The still small voice of the better judgment whispers, " Beware ! " It suggests the lack of



one adornment, the excess of a particular defect, the absence of certain desirable qualities and attainments, in vain. The *heart* silences the cooler dictates of the mind ; the question is put, the engagement made, the vows exchanged, the marriage celebrated, and the wretched parties learn, when too late, their unfitness for each other ; and, too often, their subsequent life is miserable beyond description. Be careful, therefore, young man, at the very beginning. When a slight fondness arises in your heart toward any particular lady, hold it in check until you have time to discover what she is. If manifestly unfit, intellectually, morally, or socially, to be your future wife, stifle your affection. Seek other society. The pain of such a resolution will bear no comparison with the agony consequent upon an imprudent marriage.

Most young men are chiefly charmed by what are termed accomplishments in young ladies. Thrumming a piano, working on beads or worsted, smattering bad French, and worse Italian, are arts regarded by the enraptured youth with strange admiration,

and he pronounces the lady performer a paragon of all perfection. But he should remember that these things, pleasing and even beneficial as they are in their place, are miserable substitutes for more solid and indispensable qualities. For, as HANNAH MORE has well observed, "Though the arts which embellish life claim admiration, yet when a man of sense comes to marry, it is a companion he wants, and not an artist. It is not merely a creature who can dress and paint and sing ; it is a being who can comfort and counsel him ; one who can reason, and reflect, and feel, and judge, and act ; one who can assist him in his affairs, soothe his sorrows, lighten his cares, purify his joys, and educate his children." She should be well versed in the household labors of baking, roasting, washing, cleaning and sewing ; otherwise she is as unfit to be a wife as "a shoemaker would be to navigate a man-of-war across the Atlantic." Therefore,

"Take heed that what charmeth thee is real, nor springeth of thine own imagination :

And suffer not trifles to win thy love, for a wife is thine unto death ;

The harp and voice may thrill thee, — sound may enchant thine ear,
But consider thou, the hand will wither, and the sweet notes turn to discord ;
The eye so brilliant at even may be red with sorrow in the morning ;
And the sylph-like form of elegance must writhe in the crampings of pain."

Seek for substantial as well as artistical excellences in her you would make your wife. She should be *frugal*, not wasteful ; for an extravagant wife will bring embarrassment, if not poverty itself, into your habitation ; her ambition for costly dress, costly furniture, costly living, will empty your purse, ruin your business, introduce you to the insolvent debtor's court ; or, worse than all, it will instal the demon of discontent by your fireside. She must be *industrious* ; for a lazy woman is always fretful, odious and disgusting. Who could endure a yawning, slipshod, sauntering, sleepy wife ? She should be *grave and sober* in her demeanor. The gay romp, the rattling, laughing coquette, may be very amusing at a party, but she is usually dull at home. The gayest and

liveliest in society are frequently the most unhappy by the quiet fireside. She must be *modest*; for, “How beautiful is modesty! — it winneth upon all beholders.” A young woman who will permit an unchaste word or hint to be uttered to her, even from her betrothed, or will herself give utterance to an impure suggestion, is unworthy of your love. She is an unsafe person to be admitted within the sacred sphere of marriage. She must be *intelligent* and *sensible*; if otherwise, it will be very difficult to maintain that esteem for her which is the basis of genuine and lasting love. An ignorant, blundering silly woman, is sure to expose her husband to incessant mortification, and to excite contempt and scorn in his breast towards her. She should be of a *cheerful* and *an amiable disposition*; since no nuisance is more intolerable than a scolding, complaining, contentious, woman. You had better be chained to the galleys, or allied to the plague, than to be married to such a creature. And, as a final quality, your intended bride should possess a *pleasing countenance*. I do not say that she needs to be beautiful, but since

she has to be your constant companion, there must be something attractive in her form and face, to insure the continuance of affection. Beware of a woman whose features express harshness, cynicism, surliness or sourness. Such expressions written on the countenance are the unerring indications of a mind distempered, of an unamiable disposition, of an unhappy heart. Therefore, avoid all such, as you would shun the cholera. Seek one from whose countenance inward loveliness beams like the softened light from a transparent vase.

“Affect not to despise beauty: no one is freed from its dominion;

But regard it not a pearl of price;—it is fleeting as the bow in the clouds.

If the character within be gentle, it often hath its index in the countenance—

The soft smile of a loving face is better than splendor that fadeth quickly.”

Remember that the bond of marriage is as gyves of brass. And, therefore, you must prefer doing violence to your feelings, rather than to rush blindfold

into certain misery, which can terminate only with the life of one of the parties.

But, whenever you can find a lady possessing the characteristics I have enumerated, seek her society, and, if you can, win her pure affections. Such an association, viewed in the aspect already exhibited, next to religion, is the best and surest preserver of virtue in a young man. It will meet a want of his nature ; it will give him an object to love ; and as Rousseau observes, "Were I in a desert, I would find out wherewith in it to call forth my affections. If I could do no better, I would fasten them upon some sweet myrtle, or some melancholy cypress. I would love it for its shade, and greet it kindly for its protection. I would write my name upon it, and pronounce it the sweetest tree in all the desert. If its leaves withered, I would teach myself to mourn ; and if it rejoiced, I would rejoice with it."

There is much of poetry in this, but there is also a great truth beautifully expressed. The mind must have something to love, or it will prey upon itself. But when it finds an object of sufficient worth "to

lead it out of itself to live in and for another," then, it has gained its counterpart, and develops itself in a most pleasing and happy manner. Therefore, I say, seek a suitable object for your affection, though years may elapse before you are in a condition to marry. TUPPER gives a reason for such a step, in his "Proverbial Philosophy." He says :

"They that love early become like-minded, and the tempter toucheth them not :

They grow up leaning on each other, as the olive and the vine."

True affection, founded upon genuine esteem, must lie at the basis of honorable and pure marriage. Without such holy love in both the parties, disgust and wretchedness will be the baleful fruit of their legal alliance ; for

" He that shuts love out, in turn shall be
Shut out from love, and on her threshold lie
Howling in outer darkness."

But even love is not the sole prerequisite of a happy marriage. A young man may find it neces-

sary to 'nip his affections in the bud, if the lady who attracts him is far above his rank in society. There is deep meaning in the poet's counsel, who says :

"Be joined to thine equal in rank, or the foot of pride will kick at thee ;
And look not only for riches, lest thou be mated with misery."

If she is below your grade, providing she have high moral and mental qualities, her lowness and poverty need not stand in the way of your affection, since marriage always raises or depresses the woman to the level of her husband. Marry not for money's sake. Such an union is an abomination before God, and a degradation to the parties. Better let your bride resemble the Greek maiden, who, when asked what fortune she should bring to her husband, nobly replied :

"I will bring him what gold cannot purchase—a heart unspotted, and virtue without a stain, which portion is all that descended to me from my parents."

Neither, if *you* happen to have wealth, should you

select a bride who is more influenced by your invested moneys and flourishing business than by pure affection. There are women, of whom, to the disgrace of their sex, it may be said, in the language of Byron :

“ But pomp and power alone are woman’s care,
And where these are, light Eros finds a fare ;
Maidens, like moths, are ever caught by glare,
And mammon wins his way where seraphs might despair.”

Shun all such creatures. You had better take a viper into your bosom.

Avoid also a sceptical woman. In these days of ultraism and radicalism, there are many such “moral monsters,” who, forgetful of the hope and faith we naturally expect from their sex, have broken loose from their God, from the holy Scriptures, and from the delicacy of woman’s nature. Such unfeminine creatures brawl loudly against revelation, and even venture before the public as loquacious leaguers with Voltaire, Paine, and Abner Kneeland. Such women are unfit for marriage. If they respect not the claims of God, nor heed the bonds which bind them to relig

ion, how can they be expected to be faithful to the law which binds them to a husband ? Impossible ! infidel men have understood this. Hence, LORD CHESTERFIELD counselled his son to marry a woman of pious tendencies ; and DR. BRAINARD mentions a very profane man, who expressed joy that he was not "to be linked to a female infidel," whom he heard question the truth of the Bible. These men, bad as they were in other respects, were right in their opinion of the unfitness of a sceptical woman to be a wife. Do you take heed, my young friend, and keep your affections free from such. Celibacy is far better than wedlock at the altar of infidelity.

Be not in haste to wed. While early marriages are to be encouraged, if circumstances are favorable, it is the height of folly, and often the first step to a long career of bitterness, for parties to marry without any reasonable prospect of comfortable support.

" Marry not without means ; for so shouldst thou tempt Providence ;

But wait not for more than enough ; for marriage is the DUTY of most men."

This is excellent counsel. A young man should wait until his income is sufficient, his business established, his resources somewhat certain. Marriage brings with it many expenses, and these increase with time; and a marriage without means will surely bring poverty and sorrow. Affection is a poor banker, a miserable purveyor, a wretched landlord. With *limited* means it may do well, since it stimulates industry, excites energy, and can invent many innocent devices to compel small resources to supply large wants. Prudence must be allowed to utter its cautions in this matter; and if you are prudent, young man, you shall do well.

In courtship, a young man should be stable. A marriage engagement is a solemn and a serious affair. It takes a deep hold on the heart of a young woman. Her first love is a holy thing. It becomes life and gladness to her spirit. But,

" If the love of the heart is blighted, it buddeth not again :
If that pleasant song is forgotten, it is to be learnt no more ;
Yet often will thought look back, and weep over early affection .
And the dim notes of that pleasant song will be heard as a
reproachful spirit,

Moaning in *Æolian* strains over the desert of the heart,
When the hot siroccos of the world have withered its one oasis."

If these affecting lines are true to experience, what shall be said of a young man who sedulously seeks a young girl's love, until, in her trustful simplicity, she yields him her whole heart, and looks up to him as the future companion of her life, and then, *through sheer fickleness*, abandons her for another? Is he not cruel, heartless, and false? Does he not inflict a deadly wound on her spirit, from which she may never wholly recover? Does he not deserve the severest reprobation? He does; and, be assured, that no young man can be guilty of such reckless trifling with the female heart, without being subsequently visited by the retributions of an avenging Providence. His sin will "*find him out.*"

But what, if his first promises were prematurely given, and further acquaintance convinces him that the lady's ill qualities are such as will certainly embitter his life, in the event of marriage? Is he then

to consummate his courtship, and enter with open eyes upon an "ill assorted" union?

To this I answer, certainly not, providing there is a discovery of positive unfitness, and not a mere excuse for instability. The parties had better suffer the pang of separation during courtship, than to be yoked to a heritage of misery and sorrow for life. But, beware lest mere fickleness leads you to imagine faults merely to furnish an excuse for the violation of your engagement! Prefer to keep your promise unbroken, if it be at all consistent with your hopes of happiness. The true remedy for such separations is prevention. Let your first advances be sufficiently cautious to enable you to judge of the lady's character before you enter on more familiar intercourse. And another means is to treat your courtship as a serious part of your conduct. Carry it on in a manner consistent with the high purposes of marriage. Not with silly gigglings and idle commonplaces. Seek to cultivate each other's tastes, to call forth ideas and modes of thought hitherto undeveloped. Aim to produce a spiritual union between

yourselves. By this means the little things which usually separate betrothed parties will not disturb your intercourse. You will be satisfied with each other, and fitted for the more intimate and sacred unity of the marriage state.

Against one disgusting practice, but too popular in many parts of the country, allow me to earnestly counsel you. I mean the habit of sitting up to a late hour of the night with your betrothed. While there cannot be one reason urged in defence of this unchristian custom, there are serious objections against it. It injures health ; it unfits for the duties of the next day ; it has an impure aspect, and is a temptation to virtue. By all the decencies and proprieties of life, I beg you, young man, to have self-respect sufficient to set yourself heartily against it. Let your intercourse take place at proper hours, and under circumstances which favor you and yours in acquiring an affinity of tastes and opinions.

I cannot, perhaps, close this chapter, on courtship and marriage, more profitably than by giving the

eccentric and celebrated William Cobbett's account of his courtship. He was a sergeant-major in a British regiment of foot, serving in Canada, when he first met the lady who afterwards became his wife. She was the daughter of a sergeant of artillery, so that in rank they were pretty equally matched. He first met her in company, and was forcibly struck with the beauty of her countenance, and the marked propriety of her behavior. He resolved to note her conduct, and to study her character. A few mornings after this first introduction, he took occasion to walk, with one or two companions, past her father's house. Although it was scarcely light, he saw her at the door, cheerfully scrubbing out a wash-tub on the snow. This confirmed his good opinion. Further observation being still more in her favor, he made up his mind that she should be his wife at a proper time. This purpose he never dreamed of changing. It was settled in his mind, and he treated her accordingly. Her father's regiment being ordered to England, it was necessary for them to be separated. To show the fixedness of his purpose, and the confi-

dence he had in her affection, he gave her the entire amount of his savings,—six hundred and fifty dollars,—bidding her use it, if necessary for her personal comfort, before his arrival in England. This confidence was not misplaced. Though over four years elapsed before she saw him again, and she had to work hard, as a house-servant, for a living, yet she remained true to her vows, and returned him every dollar of the money he had placed in her hands. He married her, and attributed much of his signal success in life to her very excellent qualities.

But notwithstanding Mr. Cobbett's fidelity to his first promise of marriage, he narrowly escaped the guilt of its violation. His betrothed had been absent two years. He was rambling in the woods of New Brunswick, when he stumbled upon a clearing, with a farmer who offered him the hospitalities of his home. This sturdy backwoodsman had a daughter, aged nineteen—a finely formed, blue-eyed girl, with long, light-brown hair. Young Cobbett was charmed. He repeatedly visited the place, mingled in the par-

ties and merrymakings of the homestead ; and, notwithstanding he felt conscious of being attracted by the young lady, and that she was also becoming interested in him, persisted to visit her, until the idea of parting grew exceedingly painful to both. Happily, his sense of obligation was strong ; and, wrong as he was in placing himself within the sphere of temptation, and in trifling with the affections of another, he remained faithful to his first vows. This wrong of indulging in the society of the lady of the woods he very ingenuously confesses, and bids others act more wisely and cautiously, lest they should lack the self-control which finally saved him from becoming a covenant-breaker. I join my counsel to his, and advise every young man, first, to exercise due caution before making a marriage engagement ; secondly, having made it, to consider it inviolable, except under very extraordinary circumstances ; thirdly, to defer his marriage until, in the opinions of his parents or judicious friends, the suitable time has arrived ; and, finally, to enter the marriage

state with pure, spiritual, and holy views, that it be a real blessing to him and his bride in both worlds.*

CONCLUDING NOTE.

AND now, dear young friend, I must bid you adieu. I have urged the practice of great principles upon your understanding and heart, that you may win the* prize of a happy and successful life. I have stimulated you to be eminent in your profession, by the due observance of the great and holy truths revealed in the Divine Word. Not that I consider success in this life to be the end of your existence. No! To glorify God, to attain His moral likeness, to diffuse enjoyment among your fellow-creatures,—these are the grand aims of human life. But in reaching these aims—in grasping the greater—you will more surely reach the lesser than by any other method; for, religion is the good genius of both worlds. This

* For Counsels to the Married, see a recent work by the author, entitled "Bridal Greetings," &c.

idea I have endeavored to illustrate in the preceding pages. Let me entreat you to seize it heartily and earnestly! Let it blend with all your thinkings. Allow it to mould your character, to govern your conduct. Thus will you rise to usefulness and enjoyment on earth, and to a place in that moral firmament where the wise and good "SHALL SHINE AS THE STARS FOR EVER AND EVER."

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